The New INTERNATIONAL

NOVEMBER • 1945

COLONIAL WORLD IN FERMENT

Its Relation to the European Revolution

An Editorial

How To Fight Native Fascists

The Beginning of a Discussion

JAMES BARRET:

New Tactics in the Fight Against Totalitarianism

MARTIN HARVEY:

Does Freedom of Speech Include Fascists?

The Character of the Russian Revolution — *Leon Trotsky*

Japan's Days of Defeat — *William Braden*

Socialism or—Atomization — *Willem De Voorter*

On WP-SWP Unity — *Documents*

Politics of the International Working Class — *Feature*

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Business Manager's

MEMO TO OUR READERS

The war seriously affected the growth of our magazine. Lack of manpower not only curtailed our circulation but made it impossible at times to even meet publication deadlines. In September we reorganized the editorial staff and business department and already our readers can see the improvement in content and efficiency. Unfortunately, we have not been able, as yet, to catch up with our printing deadline. This will still take a little time.

In spite of our difficulties, the NEW INTERNATIONAL continues to be the leading journal of Marxist theory in this country. With further effort we aim not only to improve its content but also increase its circulation.

We are initiating a modest drive to obtain 500 new subscribers to the NEW INTERNATIONAL by the first of the year. We are going to mail a sample copy of this issue of the magazine to every subscriber of our companion, weekly newspaper, *Labor Action*. Members and supporters of the Workers Party plan to visit every friend of *Labor Action* to obtain a subscription.

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME XI NOVEMBER, 1945 NUMBER 8

EDITORIAL COMMENT—

COLONIAL WORLD IN FERMENT

Its Relation to the European Revolution
Its Challenge to American Labor

"We will live in hell but never under Dutch rule."

With these words inscribed on their banners, young Indonesian revolutionaries last month keynoted the fierce determination to achieve freedom that was sweeping through the colonial world.

Spearheaded by the armed revolts in Java and Indo-China, subject peoples everywhere were stirring. Arabs, Koreans, Nigerians, Burmese, Malayans, Palestinian Jews, Latin Americans, South African natives, peoples of various colors and conditions of servitude were coming forward to present their claims for some of the freedom which the imperialist powers had so lavishly promised during the course of the war.

An intensified nationalism had been a political weapon of both imperialist camps in the war. The nationalist spirit they had engendered was now coming back to them in an unexpected form. Forty million Javanese could not understand why they should be ruled by nine million Dutch, above all not when the Dutch government-in-exile in London had for five years sought to arouse and enlist the support of world opinion in a struggle to free The Netherlands from German oppression. Twenty-three million Indo-Chinese could see no justice in the demand that they once more bow their necks to the French yoke as demanded by the self-proclaimed Joan-of-Arc who owed his fame to an obstinate refusal to bow to the German yoke. Koreans could see no resemblance between the freedom they had been promised by the Cairo Declaration of Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek and the partition of their country into military zones occupied by Russian and American troops, the latter commanded by General Hodges who had advised the Korean liberation demonstrators to "better get home and be about your work or I will knock some heads together." The long years of propaganda about the "Four Freedoms," "Asia for the Asiatics," "One World," "The New Order," "An end to Aggression," and the "Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," emanating from London and Berlin, Washington and Tokyo, had left their mark.

However, it did not take the war to create a love of liberty in the breasts of the colonial slaves. The war merely stimulated them to new efforts and presented the favorable opportunities to conduct the struggle. Almost everyone of the peoples heard from since the end of the war have behind them a long history of maturing political struggle for freedom that has heightened national consciousness, impressed upon them lessons of strategy and tactics, and perfected their combat organizations.

How War Increased Discontent

The war, in addition to the effects of its political propaganda, led to the arming of considerable sections of the native populations. Japanese armed and trained a "Peoples' Freedom Army" in Burma. Germans and Italians armed anti-British Arab movements. Americans armed and trained hundreds of thousands of Filipino guerillas. The war brought economic changes that often for the first time revealed to the natives the material wealth of the modern world, much of it ground out of their labor, and that a better standard of living was possible. Even the Japanese occupants of Java, according to reliable information, paid native laborers considerably higher wages than the 50c to $1.15 per week they had received from their Dutch overlords. Natives in areas traversed or occupied by American troops were dazzled by the profusion of wealth represented by the average GI, not to speak of the mechanized power of modern tools that turned jungles into airfields, trails into paved highways, and erected modern soldier-cities where native huts had stood before. Those who had once worked for the "Yankee dollar" were not likely to again become docile field slaves working for a bare subsistence. Contact with troops of many nations in the occupation and reoccupation of the colonies enlarged the natives knowledge of the outside world and its ideas and could not but stimulate new thoughts and fresh hopes. Those natives who fled before the invasions to find refuge in foreign lands established contacts with new political currents, like the Javanese intellectuals who lived out the war in Australia and became acquainted with the Australian labor movement and, as the Australian dockers' strike would seem to indicate, influenced it in turn.

"When Thieves Fall Out..."

But the real connection between the war and the colonial revolt is, of course, the old truism that "when thieves fall out, honest men get their due." The war has everywhere either disturbed the status quo or completely ruptured the continuity of overlordship. Oppressed peoples are like percussion-capped bombs that must be handled safely and gently in transfer from one set of hands to another. A slip may result in disastrous consequences. Despite the best efforts at co-operation between the rival imperialists in such transfers, mishaps are not en-

tirely avoidable. British police in Singapore used their best efforts to prevent Chinese inhabitants from securing arms to form guerilla bands when the city surrendered to the Japanese in 1942. Reports from China, Indo-China, the East Indies, and other territories passing from Japanese control to British-French-Dutch rule were monotonous in their repetitious accounts of Japanese efforts to keep "law and order" until the "liberators" could take over. In Seoul, Korea, Japanese police fired into a crowd of demonstrators, killing several of them, as Koreans rushed to the water front to greet the American troops. In Saigon, Indo-China, the airfield was recaptured by British officers at the head of Japanese troops. In Java, British, Dutch and Japanese troops fought side by side against the Javanese nationalists. In China, Chiang Kai-shek appealed to Japanese garrison commanders to prevent Chinese "communists," which means all Chinese not subservient to his rule, from disarming Japanese troops. Despite the greatest care, "law and order" was not maintained completely, particularly in Java and Indo-China.

Java and Indo-China as Weakest Links

It is not accidental that the latter two colonies were the spearhead of the colonial revolt. As the possessions of France and The Netherlands they represent the weakest links in the imperialist colonial chain. The French and Dutch Empires have long existed as sub-empires of the British. The British fleet and British bases at Singapore, Hong Kong and Calcutta have been the real mainstay of French and Dutch Pacific possessions. The crushing defeat of the Dutch and French at the hands of Germany in 1940 and the occupation of their colonies by the Japanese in 1941-42 wiped out, not only their military and economic power, but the political prestige necessary to maintain a dominant place in the colonial world. The authority of the Dutch and French vanished in the eyes of their colonial subjects who saw that the master nations were incapable of either defending the colonies or their homelands.

The impotence of Dutch and French imperialism was, of course, definitively established by the final helplessness in which the colonial rebellions left them. Lacking the necessary ships, planes and troops, they were forced, regretfully, to turn over the job of stamping out the revolutionary fires to the British, who, despite the headaches that beset their empire, still remained as the bulwark of old-fashioned, colonial imperialism in the Far East. The British dared not refuse, regardless of the additional drain it placed upon their depleted resources. Age-old craftsmen in colonial rule, they know that a leak in the imperialist dike could rapidly become a flood. If the Indo-Chinese and the Indonesians were successful in winning their freedom, it could not but exercise a tremendous propulsive force upon the masses of India. Java and Indo-China meant a serious flood menace. India, however, would mean a total inundation.

Dutch Policy in Java

There were other factors that made Java and Indo-China the weak links in the colonial chain. Java is one of the most densely populated and materially richest of colonies. The Dutch, who have been there since 1595, have exploited the island as one vast source of never ending wealth; coffee, tin, oil, pepper, quinine, rubber, sugar, and countless other products shipped throughout the world meant luxurious living for the Dutch overlords and poverty for the natives. In contrast to the British and French colonial policies, the Dutch boasted that they did not interfere with the native cultures but, on the contrary, encouraged them. They made no efforts to Westernize or Christianize their subjects. The canny Dutch imperialists had calculated that such new ideas might cause discontent among the natives rather than make them more pliable instruments of exploitation. As a result, the Dutch carefully refrained from disturbing the hard-working native children on the plantations with such nuisances as education. The result has been that ninety per cent of the Indonesians were illiterate in 1940, despite the wide acclaim accorded their native intelligence by anthropologists. The latter is attested to by the highly developed cultures of Java and Bali.

Java has, economically, been to The Netherlands what India has been to Britain. The average daily income of inhabitants of the colony has been two cents a day, while Dutch firms averaged $100 million in profits. The Europeans, who composed five per cent of the population, received sixty-five percent of the wealth, while the other ninety-five per cent of the population received only twelve per cent.

Despite all studied efforts to keep the native population in ignorance and despite the most strenuous efforts at police vigilance and brutality, it was impossible to convert entirely into docile slaves such a gifted people as the Javanese living on such a wealthy, densely populated island. Beginning as educational societies among Javanese intellectuals, the underground movement for national liberation began before the First World War. In 1926 the mass discontent came to a head and the nationalist movement led huge demonstrations that demanded freedom of speech and other democratic reforms and economic betterment. The Dutch put down the movement with an iron hand, executing twenty-six, imprisoning 4,500 and sending 1,360 to what has been described as "one of the world's most terror-ridden concentration camps, Tanah Merah, in a swamp-infested jungle area of Dutch New Guinea." (Those who survived sixteen years of confinement in Tanah Merah were liberated by the Japanese in 1942 and returned to their homes. Little wonder that the Javanese nationalists are puzzled by the charge that they are collaborationists, made by their Dutch jailers, who now fight side by side with the Japanese troops!)

The density of the population, the vast natural wealth, the advanced stage of national consciousness, the intensive economic development, the maturity of political organization had all contributed to make Java too great a pressure upon the weak economic and military hold of the Dutch imperialists. It only required the war to rupture the chain at this link.

French Rule in Indo-China

Indo-China is likewise a colony of great natural wealth. Its area, a third larger than France, raised twenty-five per cent of the world's rice shipments. It is the leading source of coal in the Far East and produced one-third of the world output of natural rubber. Yet the great mass of its twenty-three million inhabitants live in great poverty. Plantation laborers earn from thirty to forty cents a day while tremendous profits have long been funnelled through the Bank of Indo-China into the pockets of French capitalists. Such ruthless exploitation requires an equally ruthless police rule to keep the natives bent to the yoke. The French ruling class has shown no inhibitions at being ruthless. If the Dutch have their Tanah Merah, the French have their Poulu Condore Penitentiary, which has never lacked capacity occupancy by young Annamite nationalists. In 1930, following the mutiny of Tonkinese troops, the French authorities unloosed a reign of terror in the colony

that resulted in widespread executions and mass arrests that almost wiped out the organized resistance movement. But the movement again showed its head when the People's Front government of Leon Blum was established in 1936. The Socialist Minister of Colonies (!) granted a number of democratic reforms, including the legalization of *La Lutte,* workers' paper published in Saigon under the inspiration of Tha Thu Thou, Indo-Chinese Trotskyist elected to the provincial assembly by the workers. However, when the workers took advantage of the new democratic reforms to organize a series of widespread strikes for economic gains, the French colonial authorities were given the "go-ahead" signal to crack down by the People's Front cabinet.

When, in 1939, the question of Japanese aggression against the colony became acute, the French officials seemed more alarmed at the prospect of a colonial uprising than over the danger of Japanese occupation. Their main concern was to prevent the nationalist movement from arming the natives for a defense of the colony against the Japanese invasion. The surrender of the French colonial officials to the Japanese and their craven collaboration, as part of the Vichy régime, made the underground nationalist resistance simultaneously anti-French and anti-Japanese. (A leading rôle in the resistance was played by Ho Chin Minh, who, under the name of Nguyen Ai Quoc, functioned as a Comintern representative along with Michael Borodin during the Chinese Revolution of 1926-27 and fled to Russia after its collapse. To what extent this signifies Stalinist leadership of the movement today is difficult to judge at present.)

The surrender of Japan made the Indo-Chinese nationalist movement the only possible successor to power. It was not until September 23 that the French, supported by the British army, fleet and air force, arrived on the scene to reclaim their possessions. This French "balcony on the Pacific" had proved an exceedingly weak link under the strain of war.

Colonial Detachments of Third Camp

The Indonesian and Indo-Chinese revolts were the first struggles of the Third Camp to emerge during the war free from compromising entanglements in one or the other imperialist camp. Unlike the European resistance movements with their London or Moscow connections, these detachments proclaimed the struggle against all imperialist oppressors of their people. By the same token, all imperialists stood united against them. Despite all slanders that seek to paint the Indonesian and Indo-Chinese movements as Japanese inspired, the capitalist press could not quite explain away the fact that these movements stood alone against the united onslaught of British, Dutch, French *and Japanese* troops.

The united front of imperialism threatens to overwhelm the Javanese and Indo-Chinese if their struggle does not strike a response in other parts of the world. The first prerequisite of their success is that the heavy battalions of the Indian and Chinese Revolutions be brought into action to confront the united front of imperialism with the solidarity of the anti-imperialist peoples. Verbal support in the form of advice and encouragement, such as offered by Nehru on behalf of the Indian Congress movement, is meaningless when India remains a base for British military operations in the Far East. But the really decisive anti-imperialist battalions remain the working classes of the imperialist nations themselves. Revolutionary Marxists have long pointed out that the colonial revolutions are doomed if limited to the bourgeois nationalist struggle for independence. They will succumb to military defeat from without and political betrayal by the bourgeois nationalists from within. The struggle against the military might of the imperialists demands the closest ties between the struggle for freedom in the colonies and the struggle for socialism in the home countries. The struggle against the betrayal by bourgeois nationalists demands the extension of the colonial revolution to the internal economic sphere and the assumption of leadership in the struggle by the colonial proletarians. Only a general strike of the British working class can silence the guns of the British fleet bombarding Surabaya. Only the leadership of the Javanese people by a proletarian vanguard based upon Marxist understanding can prevent the Soekornos and Hattas from compromising and betraying the struggle. This theory of permanent revolution, so brilliantly expounded by Leon Trotsky in connection with the Chinese Revolution, remains the key to the strategic line for the oppressed peoples of the colonial world.

European Workers and Colonial Revolt

But Javanese and Indo-Chinese revolutionaries looking to Europe last month found little encouragement. Report of the revolutionary reverberations of World War II were date-lined from Surabaya, Seoul, Yenan, Saigon, Haifa, Nigeria, Cairo and other places similarly located on the distant perimeter of the world as seen from the capitalist homelands. Cities which weekly gave forth new revolutionary sparks in the post-World War I months, like Moscow, Berlin, Budapest, Vienna, Helsinki, Warsaw, Milan and Prague, some of the oldest cities of Old Europe, remained distressingly quiet.

The shift of the location of post-war revolutionary struggles from Europe in 1919 to the colonial world in 1945 did not signify that European capitalism had grown so strong and healthful as to prove immune to proletarian revolution. On the contrary, capitalist Europe at the end of World War II was drained of its very lifeblood. From the strongest "victor" power—Great Britain—to the most devastated "defeated" power—Germany—the degrees of sickness ran the gamut from industrial dislocation and financial bankruptcy to all but total economic paralysis. But, unfortunately, the low ebb of European capitalism was matched by the low ebb of the European working class, above all, in the low Marxist content in its politics.

Two decades of unbroken defeats had ended in the catastrophic rout before the fascist tide. Two decades of political degeneration under the sway of reformism and Stalinism had so mutilated and warped working class politics that the only two perspectives that seemed realistic were either "Orientation Moscow" or "Orientation Washington." The concept that the "liberation of the working class must be the work of the workers alone" had become an "aberration" associated only with the fugitive grouplets of the Fourth International. Five years of modern, scientific slaughter and destruction had finished the work begun by Stalino-reformist misleadership and fascist brutality. The war had not only left in its wake an enervating physical misery that consumed the energies of people in the constant search for food and warmth amid their rubble-strewn cities, but also a horrible legacy of intensified national hatreds and racial feelings. And over the entire Continent, as if to seal its tortured cries of protest under an air-

tight lid, stretched the million-headed armies of occupation and/or "liberation."

Status of European Working Class

The proletariat of Central and Eastern Europe and that of Italy was dazedly trying to regain its feet and its political bearings after the long night of fascism. Decimated by war and fascism, partitioned by peace, starved and frozen by scientific, calory-counting calculation, cowed by the bayonets of four armies and deluged by competing Russian and Anglo-American propaganda, the German working class was taking its first unsteady steps toward the reconstitution of its economic organizations, and that under the direction of pro-Russian or pro-American quislings. The workers of Poland, with few illusions left about Russian "liberation," were either being "eingeschalten" in the GPU-dominated, legal workers' movement or were being driven by the GPU-organized terror into the illegal underground organizations. The workers of Italy were, at the end of two years of dubious "liberation" and twenty years of fascist blackout, dazedly trying to comprehend the contrast between the garments of the Russian Revolution worn by the party to which they gave their main support and the practice of that party which outdid the reformists in reformism and approximated the fascists in totalitarian intolerance. The workers of Hungary, Austria and the Balkans were experiencing, under the double impact of the decrees of the Russian army and the politics of the Stalinist-puppet parties, varying stages of the oppression suffered by the Poles and the bewilderment that perplexed the Italians. The workers of France had gone over, almost bodily, to Stalinism, entrusting their fortunes to a party that represented the Russian imperialist oppressors of half of Europe and large sections of Asia. The workers of Great Britain, with a spirit of "one more try," gave an overwhelming vote to the party led by the labor lieutenants of British imperialism.

Interlude in Europe

Whereas the din of battle and approaching battle was echoing through the colonial world, the proletariat of Europe was living through an interlude—an interlude between imperialist war and class war necessitated by the debilitating effects of unbroken defeats, fascist atomization and the shattering effects of war. The European proletariat needed a breathing space in which to test out parties and program in the new conditions created by the war's end and to seek out, on the basis of it, a proper orientation. That it wanted socialism was unmistakable. The votes in France and Great Britain indicated that. That it would take revolutionary measures to obtain it once it knew where its future lay and had the means with which to struggle was attested by its century-old history. If the colonial revolt is doomed by the paralysis of European labor, it also contributes to overcoming that paralysis. The attitude of the European workers' movements toward the struggles of the colonial peoples would prove one of the decisive tests in unmasking the parties of betrayal. The best of the British Labor Party militants cannot but react with righteous indignation at the perfidy of an Attlee who states that "Peace must be in the hearts of men" upon the very day the British guns begin shelling the densely crowded blocks of Surabaya. The best of the French Communist Party militants cannot but react with a class instinct when Thorez, as spokesman of the nation's largest party, maneuvers for posts in the de Gaulle cabinet while Indo-Chinese fighters fall before French tanks in an unequal struggle.

America as Super-Oppressor

But the American working class bears an equal, if not greater, responsibility than that of its Western European brothers for the isolation of the colonial revolutions. We live under a ruling class which shares with the Kremlin the distinction of being the super-bulwarks of world reaction. Even if the working class of Europe stood ready to struggle for power at present, it is faced by the vast military might of the United States; a might that throws its long, depressing shadow over half of the Continent, up to a point where it meets the shadow of armed Russian might. It is the United States to which the British Empire looks for succor in its enfeebled state, even if it must purchase it at terrible cost to its world position. It is with planes built in Los Angeles and with tanks built in Detroit that the Anglo-Dutch reconquer Java and the Anglo-French reconquer Indo-China. The "arsenal of democracy" emerges in its real rôle—the arsenal of world reaction. The illusions of peoples everywhere that America is the great liberal power will rapidly give way to the reality that reveals America as the super-exploiter that stands behind the exploiters everywhere and as the super-oppressor that stands behind the oppressors everywhere. The cynicism and mockery revealed in the American orders that their insignia be removed from equipment before being used against the colonial rebels will earn for all Americans the undying hatred and contempt of Indonesians and Indo-Chinese patriots unless the American labor movement disassociates itself from that policy by a struggle against its own imperialism. American labor cannot silently share with American capital the profits of world-exploitation without also sharing the loathing felt for it by honest men everywhere.

CORRECTION

The article by A. Arlin, "The International Significance of the British Elections," which appeared in our October issue was accepted for publication as discussion material. Not all the views expressed therein necessarily reflect the point of view of our publication. A notation to this effect was inadvertently omitted.

THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIA:

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Politics of

THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS

South African Trotskyists on Russia's War with Japan

"Forty-eight hours before the Japanese notice of surrender Russia entered the war. . . . We have no truck with Japanese imperialism. . . . The Fourth International has always stood for the defensive war against foreign imperialism. . . . Russia came in because of the bargaining of Potsdam, because of imperialist intrigues.

"Russia has come in to cover the sub-continent with her troops to stop the impending Chinese revolts, to crush the Chinese workers and peasants." — *Socialist Action,* August, 1945.

The above view, expressed by the organ of the Workers International League of South Africa, expresses the honest reaction of all truly internationalist Marxists. However, the WIL, like most of the Fourth Internationalist organizations, continues to adhere to the position that Russia is still a workers' state. On this basis they stand pledged to defend it in wars with capitalist states. Does the WIL imply that Russia did not merit the support of the workers of the world in the war with Japan? If this is their position, it indicates great progress toward understanding Russia's rôle in the war. The WIL, in this case, must state that Russia is not only capable of "imperialist intrigue" but also of imperialist war. Having taken this line of reasoning, it follows that the class character of the Russian state can no longer serve as the basis for determining the question of our attitude toward Russia's rôle in the war. It then becomes necessary to examine the concrete and specific circumstances of each war Russia engages in. It was for doing this in 1939-40 that the minority of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, organized as the Workers Party since 1940, was denounced for its "petty bourgeois" and "un-Marxian" position.

The fact that the war lasted but a few days after Russia's entry does not absolve Marxists from the responsibility for analysis of Russia's rôle. The Socialist Workers Party (Cannon faction) has avoided such an analysis like a plague. These would-be international schoolmasters of Trotskyism show no enthusiasm for theoretical discussions that go beyond recitations of quotations from Trotsky. If the word epigone ever had meaning, it fits here. We are, therefore, pleased with even these first inadequate observations of our South African comrades.

•

International Solidarity with Javanese

It may no longer be news that in October 30,000 Australian workers struck in solidarity with the Javanese people. However, this inspiring internationalist demonstration is particularly worth reporting again at a moment when His Majesty's Labor Government is ordering British troops into battle against the Javanese insurrectionists.

We quote from the report published in the *Socialist Appeal,* organ of the British Trotskyists:

"The strikes began when the executive of the Waterside Federation decided not to handle any ship on which the Indonesian (Javanese) crew was striking, or which was suspected of carrying war materials which might be used against the Indonesian workers and peasants. Four thousand wharf laborers were the first to strike; they were joined by 10,000 miners, 5,000 iron workers, 4,000 printers, 1,000 nurses and 600 powerhouse workers. In Brisbane, waterside workers refused to handle six Dutch ships destined for Java."

* * *

Much has been made in the daily press of the hesitant "socialistic" domestic measures proposed by His Majesty's Labor Government. Attlee and his ministers have a mandate from the British working class to effect vital social and economic changes. We do not think that the intent of that mandate was to combine insubstantial domestic reforms with a continuation of the Empire's traditional imperialism (however "modified" it may be by verbal refinements). The pressure at home is sufficient to compel the Laborite ministers to tread (cautiously and half-heartedly, to be sure) along the path of nationalization. In foreign affairs, especially those that relate to Britain's colonial empire, the Attlee government has already established that no more than the Churchill government does it intend to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. But imperialism abroad and socialism at home is a contradiction in terms. Such British workers as are not already aware of that fact will, we are sure, learn it. That is why we believe that the Australian workers who engaged in the "Hands Off Java" strike spoke more accurately for the British workers than does the government installed by the votes of those workers.

* * *

In a letter to Fenner Brockway, political secretary of the Independent Labor Party, regarding the use of British forces in Indo-China and Java, Prime Minister Attlee warned against "accepting at their face value reports of this kind. . . . If you care to send me your information I will have it checked up and a detailed reply sent to you. Not every movement that claims to be democratic can be accepted as such on its own statement." (*The New Leader,* organ of the ILP, October 6.)

Very well, Mr. Attlee, are British troops in Java?

* * *

From the September 28 news release of the International Transport Workers Federation:

"At a mass meeting held recently, the South Indian Labor Railway Union condemned and demanded the immediate withdrawal of an official decree prohibiting the workers of Madura and Vikramsingpuram from participating in genuine, democratic trade union activities.

"The standing order outlaws union activity, if the union is not recognized by the employer, and punishment for such a crime is immediate dismissal on a charge of misconduct."

* * *

An Associated Press dispatch from Sidney, Australia, as reported in the *New York Times,* November 12, reports that "The crew of the British ship Moreton Bay walked off the vessel today before it was to sail for Java with 1,600 Nether-

(*Continued on page* 255)

JAPAN'S DAYS OF DEFEAT

Notes of an Observer

Anyone visiting Japan today sees at very first glance that it was not the atomic bomb which defeated her; she was already defeated before that. The Japanese themselves claim the B-29 did the job. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are flat, but Tokyo, Kobi, Osaka, and Yokahoma are thoroughly blasted. The incendiary bomb burned out huge areas in all these cities.

In Tokyo, miles of residential districts have been destroyed as well as the main department store section, The Ginza, and the adjourning streets and the dock areas. In Yokahoma, the famous bund, the docks, and the largest part of the home districts are in ruins. Industries have suffered even worse damage. Almost eighty per cent of the steel mills, almost eighty per cent of the chemical plants, eighty-five percent of the textile mills, and seventy per cent of the electric power plants are inoperative. The main core of Japanese industry no longer exists or is damaged very badly. The shipyards are almost 100 per cent out of commission. MacArthur has said that Japan is now a fourth rate power. The truth is that she is no power at all. What will happen to Japan will be the effect of the policies of her conquerors upon her; unless the people of Japan take their destinies into their own hands.

The Japanese themselves are very tired, war weary, passive, and hungry. People do not go to work because work seems useless. Besides, the factories and offices are bombed or burned out and business is completely disorganized. Energies are concentrated on obtaining food and clothing and a roof for the night.

No Energy for Anger

There is no anger at the Americans; they are received with politeness and even welcome. There is hardly enough energy left for anger or hatred. The biggest thing that counts is that the terrible war is over and the pursuit of a means of subsistence dominates life. This passivity toward fundamental problems of politics permeates all from the richest to the poorest. Japan is on the verge of a terrible winter of starvation and homelessness. There are signs that the working class and small peasantry may organize soon to force attention to the dire needs of the people. At present the country continues in disrepair with nothing being done.

The transportation arteries are disrupted. There is almost no gasoline except for United States Army and government vehicles. Of the five hundred passenger cars on the main Tokyo suburban line only three hundred are now running, mobbed daily beyond capacity so as to make a rush hour New York subway look like an almost empty dance floor. I saw a woman's ribs crushed while she screamed in agony. The rest of us were helpless to move the smallest fraction of an inch to alleviate the pressure or to help her. Everyone carries bundles, things to barter for food, possessions rescued from ruined homes or black market food purchased in the country. Many people carry all their belongings on their backs. Mothers carry their children, papoose fashion, in the most crowded cars having no homes in which to leave them.

Food is not coming into the city because there is no coal for the locomotives and not enough cars. Trucks and autos are burning charcoal increasingly because of the lack of gas. At the same time thousands of trucks lie idle because of lack of gas. In the village of Mitake about fifty miles east of Tokyo I saw a score of trucks, formerly used for vegetable hauling, lined up by the roadside rusting uselessly.

Home industry was concentrated around the factory districts and in many cases integrated with large plants. These domestic industries were in workers' homes and were prime military targets. Whereas the center of Tokyo was subjected to precision bombing these populated districts were destroyed by incendiary fire. The result is mass homelessness. About two and a half million Tokyoans are estimated to be without shelter. On vacant lots all around the outskirts shanty towns, looking like Hoovervilles of 1932, are growing up. Only the central business district around the Imperial Palace, Imperial Hotel, Dainichi Building, and Tahoe Theatre are untouched.

The Food Situation

Food is practically unobtainable in Tokyo itself. What there is in the country is hoarded by the farmers for the fantastic prices of the black market, tens and hundreds of times larger than the legal prices. People coming into the city for work carry their own food or do not eat. Only a few restaurants are open to the Japanese. Practically the only restaurants are the Imperial, Dainichi, and the Marianaouchi, all in allied hands, and serving occupation troops only. In these, prices of meals are strictly pegged at pre-V.J. Day rates. At the Imperial, a lunch consisting of pea soup, salmon salad, a main entree of egg plant, cabbage and noodles in sauce, bread, butter, and tea costs ten yen or at the present exchange rate of 67 cents. A supper consisting of Waldorf salad and roast beef, soup, sea food in butter sauce, and entree of steak and potatoes, tea, and a quart of beer costs nineteen yen ($1.20). I list these menus so that the bareness of the Japanese catering restaurants may be understood, because in these food shops there is simply no menu. Three of the most popular eating places on the Ginza, Tokyo's Broadway, all have the same unvaried diet for all meals every day: tea (Japanese cup of tea is equal to about one third of an American glass) without sugar, cream or lemond and tangerine slices in sugared water, both for fifty-nine sen (4 cents). Since almost all food is on the black market, only the wealthy eat well. Tokyoans invariably look worn and thin.

Rice, the chief food staple, is rationed and distributed through government channels. The daily ration of two go a day per person is equal to about a glassful of rice. As in everything else, the wealthy obtain additional rice on the black market, where prices are beyond the reach of working men, millions of whom are unemployed and other millions only recently demobilized. Workers require more rice because of their heavy labor but receive the same official ration as the idle bankers and useless capitalists. So serious is this situation that the Socialist Party is demanding an increase in worker's rations if starvation is to be prevented and work to be continued. The Fisherman's Union, to be officially launched on November 1, is making one of its most pressing demands a

special rice ration. H. Tahara, organizer of the fishermen, claims that it has become extremely hazardous for men to leave port because in their enfeebled condition, they are often unable to work the nets or save themselves or the boats in case of bad weather.

Black Market and Starvation

Here are some black market conditions: It takes hours to obtain any kind of food. For meat or vegetables you have to go into the country. The legal price of meat is from sixty to eighty sen. The black market price is from 28 to 40 Y a pound. Black market price for rice is from 20 to 50 Y for a day's ration of two go. Potatoes sell for 18 to 20 yen per pound. American five cent candy bars get 10 to 30 Y. Sugar and salt are almost unobtainable even on the black market. Black market prices are being further inflated by the occupation troops which buy everything in sight and sell cigarettes at 20 Y a pack ($1.33). Every G.I. is a walking black market.

Japan was never self-sufficient in food supplies. Before the war she imported twenty-five per cent of her rice, for instance. This year the bad rains have ruined about ten per cent of the normal rice crop and made a large portion of the rest unobtainable because of limited transportation and destruction of channels of distribution.

Already there is starvation in the streets of Tokyo. I saw several skeletonized men lying in the gutters, hands clasped to their stomach, eyes raised in a plea for food. Meanwhile, the sacred fish continue to swim and are fed regularly in the enormous moat that surrounds the Imperialist Palace in the very center of the city.

The food shortage is well illustrated by the following advertisements which are increasing in number. These are from the October 8th issue of the *Nippon Times*: "Wanted, to buy or exchange for cigarettes, all copies of *Nippon Times* from August 10th to September 30th." "Zeiss—Film camera 16mm., also new Olympia Portable and Smith-Corona Typewriters for canned foods, etc."

Inflation is a real danger. Already most black markets are beyond the popular reach. Barter is increasing because money buys so little. Wages remain stationary, between 100 to 250 Y a month. Unemployment is increasing daily. There are six million unemployed officially recognized and three million girls mobilized for work during the war who have been asked to return to their homes. The work mobilization included all those from twelve to sixty-five. Many of the children are still working at low wages. There is nothing in the program in the present Shidehara Government or MacArthur's which indicate that relief will come in time to prevent mass starvation. C. Mizutans, leader of the Socialist Party of Japan, stated he expects "starvation of famine intensity to grip the cities of Japan this winter."

The Clothing Situation

What is true of food is likewise true of other necessities. I did not see a single matched suit of clothes, except uniforms, not even on fairly wealthy persons. People are wearing their very last remnants and these are beginning to fall apart. There are no leather shoes, even on the black market. As shoes wear out, the only substitute available are the wooden clogs called "geta." The streets, buses, and subway cars resound with the clack of the clogs. Cotton goods of any kind are unobtainable. While only about 15 per cent of the textile spindles were destroyed, there is no raw cotton on hand. It will be a long time before new clothing becomes available. Clothes look shoddy and inadequate as if everyone were wearing their old work clothes. I met a professor of public finance at Meiji University, wearing a grey jacket, black trousers, an unironed dirty shirt, no tie, and clogs on his bare feet. He had just come from the country where he had spent all morning trying to buy meat, which he hadn't eaten for several months. He told me the suit he was wearing was also the one in which he lectured, in fact his only one, that he had no shoes or socks. There is a story, probably apocryphal, that when Premier Igashkuni, a royal prince of the blood, went to visit MacArthur, he did not wear socks explaining that he had only one pair and was saving those for the winter. Although the weather is already cold and it rained six of the seven days I was in Tokyo, I saw very few people prepared for such weather. I visited a primary school principal who was dressed in a Japanese Army uniform. He explained apologetically that it was his brother's, who no longer needed it since he had already died of hunger.

The present shortage of food and all other consumers' necessities is, of course, a direct result of Japan's defeat. But it is also a consequence of the disastrous policies of the Japanese imperialists. The Japanese people have been underfed throughout the war. They have been on increasingly shorter rations because of the poor distribution and the ubiquitous black market against which almost no action had been taken. Before the war the ruling classes had exploited the people in order to concentrate on the construction of the war machine. Profits made from the intense exploitation did not go into the establishment of consumer's goods industries where ancient, domestic type of production continues. This holds for clothing, many types of shoes, and all agriculture. Modern machinery and modern techniques are almost non-existent in these spheres. Farms are seeded and ploughed and harvested with hand tools and draft animals. On the other hand, the ships and planes were among the most modern in the world. The air fields I saw were in many respects superior to the best of American army fields. All the sweat and labor of Japan were channelized into the imperialist war.

The Political Outlook

It is significant that no party in Japan is calling for a constituent assembly. All favor elections, but none demand fundamental changes determined by the people. The liberals of both pre-Tojo parties, with whom I spoke, the Seiyukal and Minseito, were contemptuous of the masses, dividing the blame for Japan's defeat and misery equally between the militarists and the masses. This is not surprising since these parties had not enjoyed great popularity. The rule of these parties had been characterized by corruption, bureaucratic abuses, and chronic economic crisis which caused general discontent.

The Liberals cannot think in terms other than submission to the conqueror: their liberalism consists of great admiration for American institutions and they desire to transport them to Japanese soil. In editorials and feature article *Mainichi*, leading liberal daily, teaches that the defeat is for Japan's ultimate good if only she "turn the presence within her boundaries of the occupation army into a medium through which she can better understand America." Japan failed because of "the less advanced state of our social ethics compared to those of the Western peoples." And so on *ad nauseum*. Not feeling intimate relations or responsibility to the people, they speak continually, of "The New Japan" rising from defeat to become a sort of forty-ninth state. But this job is to be done by MacArthur and the occupation troops. They desire a long occupation, speaking easily of ten to twenty years! They do

not trust their own abilities to accomplish this change and time has proven this lack of self-confidence to be justified.

Minseito and Seiyukai are not yet reconstituted, but undoubtedly will be before the general election. The few leaders I met were tired old gentlemen, most of them American educated, very busy exonerating themselves from blame for the war, anxious to genuflect to MacArthur and impatiently awaiting the moment when he can use them. They have no ties with the people. They are confused because the ruling class of Japan, the Mitsuis and Mitsibushis are in a state of confusion.

Attitude of the Masses

The masses of people are extremely war weary since for them the war has been going on since 1931 and at an intensified pace since 1936. Privations and hard labor have weakened them physically. Just as they paid for the cost of the war, they are now suffering the brunt of the defeat. They have been tired of the war for a long time. I was told by several Socialists and Minseito men that while many intellectuals became defeatists toward the end of the war, the masses had already been so a long time. American fliers had reported as early as last June that they were being greeted with white flags all over the smaller cities of Kyushu. Today, hatred for the militarists is universal. Reports occasionally leak through of attacks on army officers. In several instances fishermen have refused to sell fish to provision troops. If one considers the years of carefully planned indoctrination in the military code and the allegiance which the military have exacted from the people, this new attitude is a fundamental psychological revolution.

The popular attitude toward the emperor is ambiguous. Many distrust Hirohito but are fearful that an end to the monarchy would further weaken Japan and leave her without stable institutions. But there is also increasing indifference to the fate of the monarchy, as it proves itself incapable of solving the present crisis and as MacArthur continues to attack those previously associated with Hirohito.

The loss of faith in their masters of the past several decades dominates the thinking of the people and makes them as yet indecisive. It is this loss of faith which made possible the easy occupation. The coming of the Americans meant an end to the war and perhaps an end to their oppressive rulers. This was no shift of allegiance to a foreign conqueror, but thorough disillusionment with their own masters and an increasing desire for their defeat as the only way of removing them from power.

Political discussion has been non-existent in Japan since 1938. Even the patriotic societies, including the infamous Black Dragon, were disbanded and the single government party ruled. The ability of the Socialist Party to organize so quickly and the rapid development of trade unions shows the mood of the Japanese working class. Their present recovery is remarkable in view of the general situation. As the people begin to realize that MacArthur is not in Japan to solve the country's problems but is a representative of foreign imperialism, we may expect a great surge of political organization and action.

World Situation of Japan

At present, and as long as it is occupied, Japan cannot exert any influence on the world scene. The defeat signifies the end of the empire. Japanese capitalism cannot easily adjust to survival without an empire. The capitalists and bankers achieved political power by compromise with feudalism and by thrusting the burdens of both systems on the masses. Japan came on the world scene very late and suffered from a shortage of capital. In order to overcome this shortage, a policy of expansion became necessary. A second method of overcoming the shortage was to make the state a direct and integral part of the economy using its powers of taxation, monopoly grants, imperial household investments and subsidies to provide the capital for construction of large scale industry. Thus, the Japanese state and economy were more intimately interlocked than in any Western nation. Because it began so late, Japanese heavy industry began as a modern machine industry. The result is that her economy is the most highly concentrated in the world. Heavy industry was developed along modern lines at the expense of consumer's industries, which remained primitive.

The semi-feudal army, closely linked to both the state and the new economic industrialists and bankers took over the reigns of the state when war became inevitable to carry out the necessary imperialist drive for markets and capital. First to fall in the defeat has been this same feudal militarist group. But their defeat signifies the collapse of the imperialist policy for which they were the dynamic force, playing a rôle not unlike that of the German Nazis.

The economic wealth of the ruling families (Zaibatsai) has been damaged or destroyed. They no longer occupy a position of leadership in Asia and their rule at home is on a precarious basis. They are at the mercy of their imperialist enemies. They are unable to pursue their own policy but are subordinated to America's domination of the Pacific and Asia. They continue to rule and to control what is left of Japanese economic wealth because the people of Japan have not yet had their say. The American imperialists do not wish to utterly destroy them but only to control their expansive powers. Japanese capitalism cannot exist without an Empire except as a minor subject nation.

The vicissitudes of Big Three politics reduces Japan to the position of a pawn. The end of Japanese imperialism opens Asia wide to American penetration and has already given her unchallenged mastery of the Pacific. It is limited only by the growing demands of Russia, with whom the United States now has a common border, to all practical purposes.

October 19, 1945

WILLIAM BRADEN.

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SOCIALISM OR—ATOMIZATION!

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> Our treatment will be little more than an outline which may be elaborated by reference to books such as Pollard and Davidson's *Nuclear Physics* and Stranathan's *The Particles of Modern Physics.*

In the article on atomic energy, in the September issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, we made the same point that Henry D. Smyth admits to in the above quote (from the *Official Report on the Development of Atomic Energy for Military Purposes* by Henry D. Smyth, page 3) stating: there is no secret—except one; the secret that capitalism and its cohorts willingly appropriate billions for destructive purposes.

The "Official Report" quoted above proves abundantly that there was really nothing to hide, that there was never a secret, and that the average intelligent man can easily visualize all of the processes involved, and can foresee all of the further developments; provided, of course, he is capable of reading halfway intelligently.

The official report relates, how it was found at an early date, that if the abundant isotope U 238 of pure uranium is bombarded with neutrons, it is transformed into element No. 93. This is to be found in Stranathan's book. It was further found that if U 235 is left mixed with U 238 and split by means of neutrons, the former will emit the neutrons necessary to form element No. 93 from U 238, provided technical means are arranged correctly. Element No. 93 is highly unstable, and transforms itself, by the emission of an electron, into element No. 94, of highly stable characteristics. However, it is fissionable in the same manner as U 235. Thus, as predicted in our first article, an abundance of raw material for atomic bombs can be and was manufactured.

One should not imagine, however, that no scientific progress was derived from the expenditure of two billion dollars of the public's money. Our vocabulary has been enriched considerably: the new elements have been baptized. Element No. 93 shall be known, henceforth, as neutunium; while element No. 94 has added the name plutonium to our dictionaries. Thus we behold the benefits of democracy: a baptismal party for a few elements, more costly than the baptism of the most exalted princeling ever born; a burnt offering to the gods of Democracy of such munificence that even the Carthagenians could not have exceeded it. Yea, verily, it is to be doubted whether even a Hitler could have thought of a grander mode of self exaltation.

Achievements at Solar Temperatures

And the dawn of even greater achievements is upon us (with notes of warning to mankind, of course). It has dawned on the great bringers of gifts to humanity that it is possible to achieve far greater and far bigger things. They have realized that even as U 235 may be used to start a string of events, and create vast supplies of plutonium, so plutonium may, in its turn, be used in a very similar manner. With its help it is possible to create, instead of terrestial temperatures, solar ones. And at solar temperatures the wonders never cease. One atom of ordinary carbon and four of hydrogen may be combined to form carbon and helium, with a liberation of energy in the amount of 30 million electron volts. There are known, and there will be found, hundreds of reactions with ordinary, cheap materials, which can be "triggered off" with the greatest of ease, now that we possess the suitable trigger. For instance, lithium, bombarded with deuterons or neutrons, disintegrates into two alpha particles plus energy of 20 million electron volts. Truly, the millenium is at hand. We may say, in the word of the immortal who coined them: "You ain't seen nuthing yet."

So much for the glories of science, and its accomplishments in this matter. There is nowhere in sight, of course, a single indication of that atomic age we heard about, and which has apparently already died an inglorious death on the airways. There is only a promise of bigger and better destruction: plenty of that.

Colonial Revolts and—the Bomb

Several years ago, shortly after the beginning of the present war, the author made the remark: We are living in a period in which history is made by the minute. He is reminded of this fact while writing this article. During the period elapsing between its writing and its publication history is being made at an ever accelerating and frightening rate. When my last article was being written, one could still refer to Dutch colonial power as a vital force. Today the Dutch colonial policy is concerned mainly with saving the remains, and—with learning the meaning of the expression "saving face." The Dutch have learned the truth of Multatuli's "Max Havelaar," which quotes an Indonesian song promising dire vengeance on everything Dutch. Today the British, with Japanese help, maintain "order" in Indo-China and Java (meaning of course that they burn, pillage and murder) for the sake of saving their own empire—and the white man's face. The threat of the atomic bomb hangs over the Javanese "rebels" as much as over the rest of humanity, because is not the motto of the illustrious house of Orange, and of the Netherlands, a glorious: "Je maintiendrai"?

* * *

The threat of atomic bombs is reverberating over the entire world and arouses everywhere the greatest fears and resentments.

Mankind is confronted, today, with no question of greater importance. Mankind must make a choice such as never confronted it. There are but two alternatives: Control atomic energy or die. There is no other choice.

This choice is the gravest problem ever posed, because it is so urgent, more urgent than we realize. The ruling class does not know how to control atomic energy. There is more pitiful confusion on this subject than on any other. Thus mankind is faced with the most fateful choice of all the ages and the most urgent one: Life or death. There is no third alternative.

There Is No Secret

The necessity of the choice is urgent, because *there is no secret.* Beyond a doubt, Franco, with the Spanish uranium ores at his disposition, is preparing to make huge quantities of

plutonium, if actually the manufacture has not already been started. Russia has, without a doubt, all the ores necessary to start production on a huge scale, and undoubtedly has started such production. It was reported that a Japanese nuclear physicist, Arikatzu, laughed in the face of an American journalist, who interviewed him, and stated emphatically that Russia is provided plentifully with atomic bombs, infinitely more effective than the ones dropped on Japan, manufactured under the guidance of one of the world's greatest nuclear physicists, Kapitza. Over one of the radio chains it was reported that Kapitza has the disposition over fissionable elements other than uranium: again a deep secret, of course, and probably related to the fact that thorium and protactinium may be split in a manner similar to the fission of U 235 and plutonium. The mineral wealth of Argentine is very little known, but from the actions of the governing clique in that hapless country one may guess that the military expenditures rest on the knowledge that they will be able to match anyone in frightfulness. Brazil, with large amounts of thorium available, becomes automatically a "great" power, as does Belgium, which as yet controls the Congo and its wealth of uranium ores.

There is no secret: any madman can start the manufacture, any time he wishes. He does not even need two billion dollars to do it: that happens to be necessary only when dollar-a-year men are the guiding spirits. Arguing for strict control of the vaunted "secrets" of atomic power, Vannemar Bush let the real cat out of the bag, when he stated that without absolute control of nucleur physics, its study and teaching, by an all powerful commission of nine prominent men (i.e., men with bankbooks and connection with probably the nine most powerful and nefarious corporations in the country) there was a good chance that some lone student might create, somewhere in an attic, sufficient fissionable material to blow the United States off the map.

It cannot be repeated too often: There is no secret; the knowledge is available to any fascist madman, to any capitalist state, to any power-hungry group of conspirators. Hence the fact that mankind is confronted by the ultimate necessity to choose: Life or death.

There Is No Time

The question of the choice is urgent: because not only is there no secret, but the fact, too horrifying to consider, is that there is actually no time. There is no time for a survey, for an investigation, for ripe consideration. The time for the choice is now; today, rather than tomorrow. There is only the choice between two alternatives: Life or death.

Washington buzzes with investigations. Of course the attempt was made to slip atomic power into private, capitalist hands. The voices of a few thinking men were heard in protest, and the Kilgore Committee, at least, succeeded in dragging some of the awful truth into the full glare of day. At last a few conscious-stricken scientists have been heard, against the desires of the Army and Navy, and have sounded a warning. It has been stated that all we hope to have in the way of a secret is the know-how. Of course, we now have to surround this so-called exclusive know-how with the cloak of mystery. Because this establishes that we, the people, who paid for it, sweated for it and bled for it, not only got for our two billion dollars two new names for elements (which were already known), but in addition we got "know-how." We possess the awesome secrets of how to make and assemble atomic bombs. This includes the ultimate secret of how to ship plutonium without taking an instantaneous one way trip into eternity. In addition, we get for our two billion dollars, a first class vaudeville performance: we see Congressmen who cannot understand what they hear and Senators who cannot understand what they read, making estimates as to the time it will take "other nations" (meaning, strictly confidential and under the oath of secrecy, of course, Russia) to complete the atomic bomb. And more: we see solemn and dignified men like Vannemar Bush and Langmuir testify, assuring the estimable men on Capitol Hill that these mysteries are so deep that it will take others years to penetrate the seven veils which guard the secret of the know-how. The estimates vary from two to seven years.

Bomb May Be Planted Anywhere

These holy secrets involve mostly the construction of a mechanism. A mass of plutonium over a given size is self-acting, and it is therefore necessary to have a bomb which is safe in transport and self-assembling. Separate masses of plutonium are kept apart, and mutually shielded by means of cadmium shields in transport of the complete bomb. Of course, in a bomb which is expected to make a decent performance in our civilized society, there must be many such masses. Now when the bomb is to be set off, a mechanism must rapidly bring the several masses of plutonium in close contact, remove the shields, and at the same time form a tightly closed shell around the plutonium, so that the full beauty of the ensuing spectacle may be the better enjoyed and described by Mr. Laurence of *The Times* and other atomic bomb fans. Mechanically inclined readers are urgently requested not to send designs of mechanisms which will accomplish these things. Such designs would have to be treated as "military secrets" and would fall under the provisions of the May-Johnson Act, or something just as stupid. Moreover, it is rumored that up to this writing only seven hundred twenty different designs have been filed and approved as "strictly, secretly confidential" or whatever the nomenclature is. Further designs must wait until a few more filing cabinets can be obtained and room found for them.

Actually, of course, none of these estimable scientists, nor the President of these United States, nor the author of this article, have the slightest notion whether or not atomic bombs have already been planted in New York, Washington, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and a few other choice locations, ready to be set off at the touch of a button by some maniac in Mexico, Russia, Argentina or Kamchatka.

There Is No Defense

Army and Navy men give us the assurance that what we need is more ships, more men, and more and better airplanes (so as to intercept the bombs when they are sent in!). Their puerile minds of course cannot possibly see beyond their "professions." According to a military mind, you do things the "approved way." Since "we" now have buzz bombs and super rockets, it is a foregone conclusion that that is the way you plant atomic bombs. To show how far ahead we see, we decide that the bombs will be transported by rockets at super acoustic speeds, that is, at speeds greater than the velocity of sound. We welcome improvements, but this is the way it is going to be done. Because the military like to do things the accepted and approved way. Often, when trying to unravel the reasoning of these men, one is reminded of an episode from history, in which the commanders of two opposing professional armies are stated to have exchanged polite civilities over the question of which side should have the privilege of firing the first volley.

An army of four million men, says General Marshall, will enable us to keep the peace. More ships are needed, says Admiral Purnell. Asked an embarrassing question about atomic bombs, which might put army and navy *hors de combat* in a matter of seconds, this shining light, testifying before the illustrious thinkers that frequent the halls of Congress, answers: "Of course, that might possibly happen, but that remains to be seen." We may assume that Purnell would gladly undertake to report after he has "seen." Testifying likewise before the Solons of our commonwealth, Oppenheimer, who should know what he is talking about, states: "Yes, it is entirely possible that a single atomic bomb raid on this country would kill 40 million people." However, he realizes that the bombs may be planted at leisure, during "peace time," to be exploded one by one or simultaneously, and states that there is no way of preventing this being done, or of detecting the presence of the bombs, because the fissionable elements used in them exhibit almost no radio activity. It is, for instance, possible to find a gram of lost radium in a city the size of New York, if it is not encased in lead, but it would be impossible to so detect tons of plutonium.

The Bare Facts

These then are the facts: there is no secret, and there is no time, *and there is no defense.* Mankind faces the crossroads and must choose. There are but two choices: Life or death.

Often one has marvelled at the genius of Marx, of Lenin, and of Trotsky. But none of these men could foresee that mankind would face the necessity of choosing between life and death. These men would, if now alive, raise the slogan: *Socialism or death.* There is no time: mankind stands at the crossroads *now.* Mankind must make its choice *now.* And there are but two choices: Life or death, and life means Socialism.

This is the plain, unvarnished fact: We as socialists must understand this above all. No group can save mankind but those who understand and preach, day and night, that there is but one possible way of Life: Socialism. We must burn this fact into our consciousness and express it with our every utterance: mankind must choose: Life or death, and this means that mankind faces the ultimate choice: Socialism or death. Should mankind make the wrong choice, there will probably be surviving individual members of the human race to again start up the weary path through the countless ages of barbarism. Vincent Benet, in one of his stories, tells of a young man who, in the far future, dares the gods and crosses the awesome Hudson River to visit the City of the Dead. He finally decides to learn how to study the books, and becomes as godlike as those ancients, who could build roads and make metals, the remains of which were still to be found in the countryside.

If one wanted to be cynical, one would say: good riddance to man. But there would be surviving members of the race; those men would slowly sink back to barbarism. Man would have to start all over again. He would have to wait for who knows how many thousands of years for a new civilization to be born, which could again give man the plenty which our technological society is capable of providing today. They would have to wait, through the ages, for their Karl Marx to show the way out of morass. They will die and suffer in misery as man has died and suffered before through the ages, until they face once more the same dilemma that today confronts mankind: Socialism or death.

One wishes for the pen of a Shakespeare, the power of the golden tongue, and the means of broadcasting everywhere the warning: Mankind! there are only two alternatives: *SOCIALISM OR DEATH.*

WILLEM DEVOORTER.

NEW TACTICS IN FIGHTING TOTALITARIANISM

A Critique of the Liberal and Radical Positions

(With the publication of the following article, we open our pages to a discussion of the controversial questions which its author raises. The editors of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL find themselves in substantial disagreement with the point of view here presented, particularly those views expressed in the concluding half of the article to appear in our December issue. The latter issue will contain a reply presenting our own point of view.—*Editors*)

INTRODUCTION

"Totalitarianism" is used here to describe a system existing in Russia or in any fascist country. It also describes the activities of those native, multi-shirted internationalists who not only attempt to aid such totalitarian powers abroad but also to effect a similar type of régime in this country. Included in the term is any individual, group or movement subscribing to the persecution of race, color or nationality. The term, thus, also covers the activities of tomorrow's nameless who will take the place of those whom we have learned to identify as Bundists, fascists, Stalinists and their associates. "Liberalism" will be explained in the context of the views herein presented. "Radical" is to be construed as synonymous with "Socialist" and is chosen for its inclusiveness lest any specific group lay unction to its soul and feel that my criticisms have validity as far as every other organization is concerned, but not its own.

The question might be raised as to the wisdom of drawing attention to these manifestations of totalitarianism indicated above, while a greater danger seems to be emerging from the statisms inherent in contemporary capitalism. The answer is that most liberals have by now been sufficiently schooled through recent events to detect encroachments by the state.[1] The radical's theory of the state keeps him constantly on the alert for such aggressions. One does not have to be particularly astute to detect and react "instinctively" against such frontal attacks as no-strike pledges, black-listings by the War Manpower Commission, threats by Selective Service, labor drafts, etc. I am dealing with the other dangers because not sufficient attention has been paid to them and even when it has, the methods employed to combat them have been woefully inadequate. As far as the fascists are concerned, the war in the eyes of most people seemed to have "taken care" of them; as for the "democratic" Communists, they too appear to be no problem as far as the innocent can see. However, the Communists will be with us at least as long as Stalinism, or its counterpart, continues to exist in Russia. The ideological and organizational associates of the other groups are not only here, but are increasing with great rapidity. If the liberals and radicals continue to evaluate the danger of these totalitarians purely in terms of numerical strength or spectacular offensives, and if they persist in their supercilious attitude of looking upon the fascists as "crackpots" and the Stalinists as "harmless fanatics," they will commit the same disastrous mistakes as their European predecessors.

1. In fairness to the liberal, it should be stressed that his suspicious attitude toward statism follows not only from recent events but also from theories rooted in traditional 'individualism" expressed as laissez-faire, utilitarianism, rationalism, empiricism, protestantism, parliamentarianism, natural rights, etc., in the respective fields of economics, ethics, philosophy, religion, politics and law. The historical framework of these concepts will be indicated later, especially in footnote 7.

Liberal's Ineptitude

The liberal, for instance, who thinks that a few FBI arrests of fascists or the transformation of the Stalinist Party into euphemistic "committees" and "associations" can render these groups innocuous, either understands nothing of the deeper issues involved, or he is attempting to absolve a guilty conscience of the responsibility for having done little to control these destructive organizations. He may, as Dwight Macdonald suggests, counter this accusation by pointing to the liberals' condemnation of the twenty-nine seditionists, but this is beside the point. They pursued no militant policy in stopping the seditionists in the first place; it was not their libertarian theories which brought the twenty-nine to trial, but the action of Edgar Hoover, who apprehended them not for *bigotry* but for sedition. To show how superficial even his wartime "realism" was, one need only refer to the liberal's customary ineptitude in dealing with totalitarians who continued to operate all during the war under the protection of his "free speech." And the radical who feels that he has dispensed with his revolutionary duty simply by ascribing the growing bigotry to the "capitalist system" is only satisfying his sectarian ego. Field studies—not political generalizations—will no doubt reveal very close correlations between "inoffensive crackpot" activity and the racism we are now witnessing.

For instance, the notorious transportation strike in Philadelphia last summer (necessitating the use of large, armed force) disclosed the tragic results of the radical's academic attitude toward fascist propaganda which had flooded the city for the past six years or so. Coupled with this attitude was such solicitous regard for the white worker's feelings (not to be antagonized lest the radicals lose "control" in the unions) that when the anti-Negro strike occurred there was no sharp castigation of workers' intolerance, no mass protests, demonstrations, etc., by all the other unions in an attempt to effect an alliance with the democratic group inside the strike; to bring the rest of the workers to their senses; and to express sympathy with all the Negroes in the city. The radical correspondents in covering the strike never even discussed the factor of fascist propaganda in the city!

When some years ago (after the Spanish Civil War) I first suggested to liberals and radicals the arguments presented here, I immediately became suspect. Anyone who dared, for instance, advocate the illegalization of bigots was a "reactionary," violating the most sacred principles of "liberty"; and according to the radicals, I was guilty of an unforgivable heresy. I was, as that "hard-boiled" revolutionary, Dwight Macdonald, once warned me, "calling the cops." Although many of these "libertarians" through bitter personal experiences or recent world history, or even the reading of such popular works as *Red Decade, Out of the Night, Under Cover, Blackmail,* etc., and latest exposés by Segal, Riesel, Kellman and others, have had some change of heart, they have not permitted such change to affect their minds. They will admit privately, of course, that if by some act of will they could destroy all totalitarians they would gladly do so, but when asked to initiate or support juridical measures (as part of a larger program) directed toward that destruction they are unable to act. This self-inflicted impotence stems from their "libertarian" theories which we shall now examine. The reader should not regard the appended footnotes as mere gratuitous supplementation, but as an integral part of the main discussion.

I.

Havelock Ellis in *The Dance of Life* remarks that "no one has ever counted the books that have been written about morals." One could by this time make the same observation concerning the literature which has already been written about the problems of civil liberties. The reason for this is obvious when one realizes that such problems have always constituted the quintessence of the moral—and therefore political—life, dealing as they do with the relationship between the majority and the minority, group disciplines and individual freedom, societal organization and liberty, etc. One should not be surprised, therefore, to find that during socio-economic and political crises such as ours there would occur an intensified productivity of literature reflecting those very problems which are already being decided upon in the more practicable terms of group and class conflict.[2]

In both theory and practice the liberal's position on civil liberties is so seriously inconsistent as actually to contribute to the development of totalitarianism. His concept of an ideological "market place" (Holmes, Beard, et al) where views of competing individuals and groups are presented for majority approval and where minority "rights" are provided as defenses against mass tyranny is fraught with distortions relating respectively to the fields of history, social psychology, politics, and logic.

(1) The distortion of history: Since he refuses to recognize the class nature of the State, the liberal always treats civil liberties as "rights" existing "precedent to the State" (MacLeish), and therefore something so sacred as never to be abrogated. This idealistic approach prevents him from rooting those "rights" within class relationships. His constant references to the "immutable" principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are malaprops. Civil liberties during the Colonial Revolution meant opportunities for the *abolition* of despotism, and American "tradition" granted asylum here to 19th Century *democrats,* not tyrants. Liberties never meant freedom for slavocracy such as the liberal advocates when he insists upon granting freedom today to totalitarians. He fails, moreover, to differentiate between a legitimate minority which attempts to further the democratic processes and a purely destructive one intent upon establishing bigotry. The liberal erroneously considers a Debs and a Smith or a Bilbo representatives of "left" and "right" oppositions equally essential to the "democratic market place."[3]

Speech and Behavior

(2) The distortion of social psychology: Voltaire's "I disagree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it" is a psychological abstraction, since "speech" is treated here as a uniquely-privileged modality of the mind completely divorced from the whole pattern of a person's behavior. The absurdity of the quotation is quickly revealed as soon as it is rephrased, "I do not agree with what you *do,* but I will fight to the death your right to *do* it." None of the other modalities such as sight or kinaesthesia, for instance, is ever treated with such fetishistic consideration by the liberal. He recognizes the necessity of differentiating between an astronomer and a "peeping Tom." Or he will approve of a gym bout but condemn mayhem. But when it comes to "speech," the liberal proceeds to write voluminous nonsense about its "sanctity." Not merely the speech perhaps of a Bertrand Russell or a John Dewey but *everybody's.* In that vague realm which he calls "expression" there apparently exists no hierarchy of values; speech per se is precious whether uttered by the foolish or the wise, the depraved or the noble.

Your more sophisticated or "pragmatic" liberal, on the other hand, who admits that "thinking is a form of doing" and

2. See the articles and bibliographical data in **The Annals,** September, 1942 (especially the contributions by Klineberg, Lee and Miller) and the material gathered by the various inter-racial and religious organizations, as well as the works by Powdermaker, Logan, Benedict, McWilliams, Vickery and Cole, Davis-Dubois and, of course, Myrdal.

3. Q.v. the Z. Chafee, Jr., school of thought; e.g., **Free Speech in the U. S.**

that ideas, too, are "weapons," maintains, however, that (a) "opinion" must be differentiated from "incitement" and from "advocacy." The first is punishable if it expresses personal (but not group) libel; the second is always subject to prosecution, and the third, only if there is, as Holmes phrased it, a "clear and present danger." (b) "Opinions" should never be curtailed as long as anti-social "acts" which may result from them are punishable. First, the attempted neat demarcation among the three terms cannot be an intelligible guide to constructive action. According to the liberal's theory, if there are no dramatic manifestations of "violence," "incitement," etc., during a lecture, then the speaker is merely voicing an "opinion" and should not be interfered with. A totalitarian leader, thus, could in a very temperate manner (utilizing the more subtle techniques of allusion, indirection, etc.) disseminate his bigotry and even be clever enough to urge only "peaceful" means to effect his program. A socialist orator, on the other hand, in expressing his opinion could organize such large numbers of militant followers as to be punished ostensibly for "imperilling public safety" or "promoting disorder." "Opinion" can therefore be conveniently transformed into "incitement" or "advocacy" (with its "clear and present danger" clause). This last legalistic formula actually represents the nadir of the "free opinion" theory, for it is precisely here that the State reveals most sharply its coercive powers in behalf of the ruling class. People, like Fraenkel and others, who accept the validity of Holmes' directive or who subscribe to the theories of the ACLU and at the same time refer to themselves as "Socialists" are only deluding themselves, as well as others.[4] Second, neither can "anti-social" acts by themselves provide the only reason for punishment, since from a purely juridical standpoint the causal relationships between "opinion" and destructive results may at times be difficult to establish. It is an indefensible position to assume that one must wait until statements have eventuated into destructive deeds, because words alone can inflict pain and alienation, effect racial hostility, etc., and from the standpoint of some totalitarian group, these words may be much more effective at certain times (such as the present) than overt acts.

Liberal View on Slander

When it comes to considering group libel or slander, the liberal argues that prosecuting anyone for attacking a race or nationality is either impossible or impracticable.[5] We are told that "public opinion" must first be enlightened, for if it condemns bigotry then laws are not needed. If it favors bigotry, the laws won't work. Other reasons offered by the liberal include prejudiced juries and the possible martyrdom of the accused. (a) He poses the problem as though it were merely illegalization *or* public enlightenment. He not only neglects the educational value of public discussion concerning necessary legislation, but he assumes further that illegalization is proposed as the *only* method in dealing with totalitarianism. Actually it is suggested as a *supplementary* weapon within a larger framework of struggle—economic, political, social, etc.[6] (b) We are asked to put our faith in a public which presumably is capable of enlightenment but which at the same time is so perverted in its values as to confuse bigotry with "martyrdom." Such logic questions the validity of the liberal's whole jury system: can a disinterested panel ever be chosen in the first place, can it function in cases involving intolerance, must it be replaced by a body of "specialists," etc? Furthermore, if laws will not work wherever the public favors bigotry, then the decent minority seems doomed to perpetual impotence. The latter apparently can participate in "public discussions" but never initiate libertarian legislation before the majority has been fully persuaded. To be consistent, the liberal would have to disapprove of a permanent FEPC or its equivalent directed against discrimination, since these as yet may not be supported by majority opinion.

A more realistic and fundamental approach by the liberal to the whole problem of "speech" would consist first, in demanding that all opinions libelling any race, color or nationality be severely prosecuted; second, in requiring that every writer or speaker state whether his views are fact or opinion. This would act as a general warning to the consumer and minimize to a great extent the potency which the totalitarian's propaganda might ordinarily possess, depending as it does oftimes upon so-called factual "evidence" in order to substantiate its wild allegations. Being subject to prosecution for misstatement or distortion, the totalitarian would necessarily be forced to present his views as mere "opinion," thus robbing his material of much-desired "prestige" value. Third, even facts should not be entirely free from social control if they are utilized in order to bring malicious persecution upon someone. A Pegler, for instance, should not be allowed to insert *repeatedly* and *irrelevantly* the birthplace of an American (Hillman, "born in Lithuania" or Frankfurter, "born in Austria"). Any intelligent reader knows, of course, what Pegler is actually saying. According to the liberal's logic of "free speech" there is nothing to prevent this journalist from taking the next logical step by substituting "Jew" for the countries mentioned. Lest the liberal imagine that my suggestions in connection with the control of factual material might perhaps prevent necessary publicizing of social, economic, or political evils, he should remember in the first place that wherever such evils do exist, everyone should have the full right to expose them and no *guilty* person should ever have recourse to a defense against "persecution." In the second place, social control of facts does not mean that a man's past record should not be referred to, especially when he is attempting to participate in public affairs, such as running for some important office (e.g., Chief Justice Black's early association with the Ku Klux Klan). What it does mean is that no one has the right constantly and maliciously to publicize a fact in someone's past (a prison

4. Interesting in this connection is the rationale behind the defense of CP "rights" by such men as Hays, Baldwin and Ernst. Since, they argue, the CP has never been able to poll a sufficient number of votes to have any political significance, it represents no danger. They urge all liberals to concentrate their attacks upon the fascists. Thus their defense is not based upon any principle of libertarian justice to which they offer so much lip service, but is motivated instead by sheer expediency. Moreover, their argument is self-contradictory: they assume that the extent and type of influence exerted by a political group can be determined merely by its electoral power, and at the same time they urge people to combat totalitarian groups which have not even become influential enough to present formidable candidates!

5. A convenient summary of these reasons against illegalization of bigotry may be found in "Can Anti-Semitism Be Outlawed?" by S. A. Fineberg, **The Contemporary Jewish Record,** December, 1943. The author attempts to show the juridical difficulty involved, by referring mostly to precedents in Germany. The latter are discussed by A. Doskow and S. Jacob in "Anti-Semitism and Law in Pre-War Germany," **The Contemporary Jewish Record,** September-October, 1940. One major weakness, besides those which I shall now deal with, consists in assuming that the general conditions prevailing in Germany were comparable to those in the U. S. today. The German liberals, by the way, never attempted to formulate **group** libel laws.

6. One might gather from the liberal's objections that he is in a position to know the inadequacy of such method, having utilized others with greater success. He has not even availed himself fully of the usual liberal methods of combat, e.g., lobbying, mass protests, boycotting, etc., let alone employed the more radical techniques of marches, picketing, etc.

sentence, for instance, by means of which he has already paid his "debt" to society) so as to alienate him from the community. And especially should no one have the right to use as a weapon of bigotry the facts of a man's race or nationality. Finally, instead of drawing an untenable distinction between words and their "anti-social" results, the liberal should use as a guide the basic tenet of modern criminology, the danger of the criminal himself, and not only his deeds. One who merely attempts a crime or who in any way reveals destructive tendencies should be watched, neutralized or arrested. The point of attack upon the totalitarian is not only his acts but his poisonous words, his dangerous potentialities, organization tie-ups, past record, sources of support, etc.

For Suppression of Totalitarians

(3) The distortion of politics: Even within his framework of capitalist democracy, the liberal could play a more constructive rôle, once he realized that civil liberties for bigots are merely techniques for dealing with forces inimical to his "democratic" ideal.[7] As soon as these people make their position clear, it becomes pure expediency whether they should be permitted to exist. Methods of control, such as heavy fines and imprisonment for anyone (including congressmen, public officials, religious and business leaders, *union leaders,* etc.) guilty of group libel, or the requirement that the totalitarians' meetings be open and policed and that their press provide space for rejoinder, etc., are secondary matters to the main objective—eventual suppression. Anything short of this not only spells political suicide but it flatly contradicts all the other progressive activities in which the liberal has engaged, e.g., his pre-war support of the European underground, his granting of asylum to victims of fascism, and his traditional championing of generally progressive legislation. One cannot subscribe to all these and at the same time insist upon the activity of native totalitarian groups in order to demonstrate "democracy's strength."[8] The reductio ad absurdum of liberal politics is *The Progressive's* (June 26, 1944) reaction to the Supreme Court's freeing of the Nazis, Hartzel and Baumgarten. In spite of the Nazis' "gross libels," "sinister racial theories," anti-Semitism, etc., the decision, we are informed, represents a "brilliant new chapter" in our juridical history!

When confronted with the above criticism, the liberal has a last refuge, "dangerous precedents." The suppression of one group, he warns, means the suppression of others, and such action spells the end of the democratic process. We have already referred to his failure in drawing a distinction between a reactionary and a democratic minority. If this distinction were made, how would penalizing the guilty ever endanger the innocent? If a law originally framed against bigots were ever to be subverted to suppress democratic groups, the liberal would naturally fight that issue. But he should not commit himself in advance to a policy of evasion because a given situation (like all those involving human problems) possesses potentialities for evil as well as good. A recent statement by William Henry Chamberlain in connection with the Hartzel case illustrates the type of confusion under discussion. Says the author: "Personally, I should rather see a hundred Hartzels go free than run the risk that one Debs might be convicted." Note also his assumption that the same court which freed the Nazi would necessarily have done the same for Debs.

(4) The distortion of logic: The liberal fails to draw obvious conclusions not only from his social or political philosophy but from practical situations as well. Consider a few examples:

(a) The liberals' ineptitude in connection with their own "democratic" war: their criticism of the movie, "Mission to Moscow," contained the words "lies," "propagandistic misrepresentation," "totalitarianism," "apology for bloody dictatorship," etc. They also deplored the mass "cynicism and disillusion" likely to follow this film and indignantly referred to it as an "insult to American intelligence." The Writers War Board, in condemning the film, stated that "the deepest principle of human liberty is involved, the necessity of telling the truth." One would gather from all this that the picture was a destructive force the liberal could very well dispense with, especially during a war ostensibly directed against totalitarianism. Yet no one dared to suggest that the picture be withdrawn. Neither was the "public" advised what exactly it was supposed to do in connection with the future showing of the Hollywood 'epic.'[9] Or take the case of journalists, for instance, like Kahn-Sayers,[10] who pile up evidence of alleged sedition existing in this country before and since Pearl Harbor. Powerful native groups are accused of "defeatism," "obstructionism" and conduct which, as MacLeish complains, "scoffs at the law but takes scrupulous care to stay within it." Or Norman Cousins, who, among others, attacks the McCormick-Patterson press for "splitting the United Nations," "weakening American morale" and "jeopardizing the success of military operations." Yet the only program *Sabotage* can suggest is to vote for "patriotic congressmen," and all that Cousins can offer is to say that "the very freedom (the disrupters) are using as a shield has been dented."[11]

(b) Liberal trade-union policy: Prof. Childs and Counts (ideologically supported by *The New Leader*) who rather be-

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7. He never even stops to trace the class genesis of this goal, its economic, ideological and technological antecedents. In the struggle between capitalism and feudalism the "open arena" meant the freedom of the bourgeoisie to compete, conquer, exploit and defend property. In terms of a new class morality, it stressed the uniqueness of man, the superiority of reason over faith and of man's natural goodness over the corrupting institutions—church, monarchy, nobility. Later the democratic ideal was buttressed by certain pragmatic-experimental aspects when scientific technics became an inherent part of American capitalism.

8. Another typical example of contradiction is afforded by the recent wave of the liberals' adulation lavished upon Swiss "democracy" (yesterday it was Scandinavia's "middle way"). What the liberals do not explain is how the democratic processes in Switzerland have not been impaired by the illegalization of the Nazis, fascists and Communists. To be completely consistent, the liberal should do more than insist upon liberties for totalitarians (Max Lerner in one of his expansive moods demanded them for all, **regardless** of time, place and circumstance). He ought to go out of his way to **facilitate** the public meetings of bigots. Milton Mayer seems to be the only one "courageous" enough to accept the suicidal implications of his libertarian creed. That is why he can enjoy the luxury of baiting **PM, The Nation** and **The New Republic** for not bestirring themselves in behalf of the Voltairean tradition. Where were they, he asks, when "Coughlin was being suppressed and Lizzie Dilling railroaded?" ("Just a **Little** Fascism," **The Progressive,** April 2, 1945. See also his "The Hollywood Squeeze," July 23, 1945). For a nauseating variation of this theme of "loving" the fascists to death, vide **Overcoming Anti-Semitism** by S. Fineberg or the letters to Bilbo by the Negro Labor Committee and the Knitgood Workers Union (**The New Leader,** July 28, 1945; **The Call,** September 10, 1945).

9. The attack upon the picture, on the other hand, as conducted by those associated with the Trotskyist movement both here and abroad was intelligent in that it was motivated by political consistency. They exposed historical distortions, totalitarian aspects of American propaganda, etc., and they also supplemented this journalistic activity with picketing wherever possible. That was all they were supposed to do. Unlike the liberals and those radicals who supported the war **only** "militarily" (Norman Thomas and many of his followers, the Social Democratic Federation, the intellectual companions of **The New Leader** and **Partisan Review,** especially the latter's former editors, Greenberg and Macdonald et al.), the Trotskyists were not interested in advising the state how to conduct its ideological warfare.

10. **Sabotage.**

11. "The Poison-Gas Boys," **Saturday Review of Literature,** January 22, 1944. Note Goering's recent comment that "we got all the information we needed from some of your magazines and newspapers."

latedly expelled the Stalinists from the American Federation of Teachers, consider these totalitarians no better than Nazis and fascists. The authors in their *America, Russia and the Communist Party in the Post-War World*[12] warn us, however, that the Stalinists must not be proscribed since the "ultimate source of the party's strength derives from the . . . injustices . . . of American society." Now it is one thing to argue that social maladjustments give rise to political parties, but it is another to maintain that corruption and criminality should not be punished or that a *totalitarian* party is ever inevitable or essential. Counts, Childs and other union leaders also fail to draw important lessons from their expulsion of Stalinists. To be consistent in their "democratic" ideals and practices, they should by constant publicity and inter-group arrangements have helped drive them out of every other organization whose activity seriously affects the democratic life of the country. These liberals cannot in any logical or moral sense protect only themselves and be indifferent to their afflicted neighbors. The fact that the expelled Stalinists later entered the CIO should make these leaders reconsider the tenets of their ineffective creed.

(c) Liberal philosophers who are supposed to have made logic their profession: During the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life, Mortimer Adler accused Hook and his associates of being "atheistic saboteurs . . . more dangerous to democracy than Hitler." Hook and other "rationalists" countered later by charging their opponents with nothing less than "authoritarianism," "reaction," "corporate thinking," "irresponsibility." How Hook and others who have polemized for years against totalitarianism ever expected to effect a "united front" with them in behalf of "democracy" is never explained. Actually the rift at this meeting was between the same forces which —according to the liberals' war aims—were engaged in global conflict. Since the "rationalists" never made this clear, other liberal participants, also in characteristic, befuddled fashion, tried to reconcile the two factions, deploring what they considered manifestations of mere "bad taste," "acrimony" and "ill temper." Horace Kallen summed up both his own and his colleagues' disorientation with, "the softness of the liberal's heart (in dealing with bigotry) has gone to his head." But after warning further that such tolerance may mean "suicide," he concluded lamely that "the democratic way is the way toward equal liberty for different doctrines"![13]

12. Q.v., **The American Teacher**, May, 1941.

I should like to comment briefly upon Professor Overstreet's remarks at the conference, since they have especial significance with regard to religious freedom. He stated that "a man can believe in a perfectly cockeyed theology and still be a royally fine person." He also described his friend Father Ryan as "that grand old fighter for the human decencies." Does Overstreet mean that a man's ideas concerning human conduct have no effect upon his behavior? Suppose a person takes his "cockeyed" theology seriously by attempting to put it into practice. Will not his ideas eventuate into "cokeyed" actions? Father Ryan, who apparently takes his religion seriously, informs us that if ever Catholics constituted a majority of our population, they would deny those religious liberties which they themselves enjoy to all others because only Catholic theology is infallible.[14] How does Overstreet reconcile "human decencies" with a dictatorial theology? I stated earlier that an attack upon any group because of race, color or nationality should be liable to prosecution. A group naturally is not responsible for these, but it is for its religion. On the basis of my argument concerning opinions as distinct from their social consequences, I maintain that a person's religious views, like his others, should be subject to control if they are "cockeyed" enough to libel, slander or disseminate totalitarian propaganda. All the more is such social control necessary wherever anyone attempts to express his religious views organizationally by means of proselytizing party or church. Failing to draw this important distinction between a purely private religion which has no evil social effects and one which does, has kept liberalism constantly on the defensive. This is clearly indicated both in books on civil liberties where religious freedom is treated in terms of "sacredness," "inviolability," etc., and in "practical politics" where everyone, including the liberals, generally sacrifices the truth, rather than "antagonize" this or that religious group (e.g., *The Saturday Review of Literature* will not accept an advertisement from *The Converted Catholic Magazine*). Organized churches, of course, have lost no opportunity in exploiting their advantageous position by construing any criticism of their secular policies as desecrations upon man's "private" religion.

JAMES BARRET

13. Hook, S. "Theological Tom-Tom and Metaphysical Bagpipe," **The Humanist**, Autumn, 1942, and "Pro and Con the Conference, etc.," **The Humanist**, Spring, 1943.

14. **Catholic Principles of Politics.** This is the man whose recent death called forth such fulsome praise from the liberal press, including that pious sheet, **The Daily Worker**. For Catholic religious and political objectives consult the files of **The Converted Catholic** magazine.

DOES FREEDOM OF SPEECH INCLUDE FASCISTS?

Reply to Socialist Party Spokesman

What fascist preparations consist of in the United States is evidenced in recent developments. First there took place a realignment and consolidation of fascist groups and grouplets. Out of this realignment two groups emerged as the chief exponents of American fascism, each maintaining close relations with the other. These are the organizations headed by ex-Senator Bob Reynolds and Gerald L. K. Smith. The first phase is not over, in all probability will not be until one major fascist party dominates the rest. But the outcome depends on the second phase: the recruitment of the basic fascist core. In this Smith has taken the lead with a national organizing campaign to test his program and build his party.

Smith's national drive and the reception he has received — particularly in Los Angeles and Detroit—should be analyzed by every thinking worker and antifascist. They offer in miniature form the answer to rising fascism. They contain on a small scale all the tragic errors of the German and Italian labor movements and they answer that decisive question on which depends the life or death of the American working class: How to fight fascism?

There are two concepts on how to deal with fascism. One is fighting; the

other is running away. Both points of view were adequately represented in Detroit and Los Angeles. The fullest statement on the theory and practice of running away appeared in the *Detroit Tribune* of October 13 in a column "About the Common Man." The author is Judah Drob, secretary of the Socialist Party of Michigan, who is no common man himself. He studied hard in the school of SP anti-fascism and learned all about how not to fight fascism. He diligently memorized his lessons and set them all down in one column.

On Giving Smith Publicity

Without even warming up, Drob includes several errors in his first sentence. "Gerald L. K. Smith's best friends," he says, referring to the Negro and white unionists, the veterans, the Jews and others who were on the picket line, "are out helping him get publicity, money and martyrdom again." We will pass over the vicious slur against the anti-fascist pickets. But the rest of the sentence is a lie which must be destroyed. It is a lie as old as fascism and has served to hinder the fight against fascism equally as long. We might note in passing that if Drob were really consistent he could have saved himself a lot of trouble if he had not written his column in the first place. That would have resulted in that much less publicity for Smith. But then we have long given up asking for consistency from the Socialist Party.

The idea that without anti-Smith actions Smith would get no publicity and no money is based on the false conception that Smith is a crackpot and gets his only support from poor, misguided sections of the public. The facts, however, are quite the contrary. Fascism does not consist merely of crackpots with ridiculous ideas with which they fool a gullible public. Fascism, in the last analysis, represents reactionary monopoly capitalism. Fascists advance a program which is carefully and methodically worked out, stupid as it may appear, to rally demagogically a crisis-torn middle class to be used as the props of big business. That is the conscious aim and rôle of fascism and, so, of Gerald Smith. The ruling capitalist class knows how to make use of the fascists when they need them. The most far-sighted capitalists supply them with funds and publicity even now. Among the contributors and supporters of Smith are some of the leading representatives of American capitalism. Henry Ford, William Randolph Hearst, James H. Rand of Remington-Rand, Arthur Hays Sulzberger of the *New York Times* are some whose names have come to light. "Many of the lesser industrialists around Detroit make no attempt to deny their contributions to Smith," said W. B. Huie in the August, 1942, *American Mercury* (quoted in *The Truth About Gerald Smith* by Hal Draper). Smith will never want for money or publicity so long as there are capitalists who fear the working class threat to their power and profits.

Effect of Picketing

Talk of martyrdom is just so much hogwash. It is a fact that at previous meetings in Detroit Smith was able to get packed halls. Yet his last one, at which the picket line was announced, was relatively poorly attended. Fascists are a cowardly lot and a show of opposition will keep them home. The effectiveness of the picketing is evident in more than the attendance at his meeting. The tremendous protest that was aroused in Los Angeles resulted in a visible back-tracking in Smith's Detroit speech. He was far less bold in his anti-Semitism, anti-Negro and anti-labor remarks. He attacked Negroes and Jews only by implication and indirection, whereas in Los Angeles he was open and bitter. What reason could there be for this except his fear of an aroused labor movement? Martyrdom? Quite the contrary. The Los Angeles and Detroit actions had him scurrying for cover.

Drob isn't merely against the picket line because it's bad tactics:

> This business of picketing Smith's meeting would have been okay if it had just been a picket line. I'd still have said that it was a tactical error....
>
> But the whole matter went far beyond that when efforts were made to deny Smith the right to hold this meeting and to prevent people from entering.
>
> Then it became a matter of principle. [It is a sad but true fact that included in the right of free speech is the right to use and misuse any word in the language—including "principle."] Under our democratic principles, even so low a character as Smith has a perfect right to hold a meeting and say what he thinks....
>
> Freedom of speech and assembly don't mean a thing if they just mean the right to speak and meet about popular points of view. Those rights are to protect the unpopular minority, too.

Pickets Have Rights Also

Our principled Mr. Drob is forgetting some of his principles. One of them is the democratic right to picket. Perhaps long dissociation from such practice has dulled Drob's memory, but there seems to be a vague connection between picketing and keeping people out of something, a plant, let us say. Have any capitalists. courts or police ever objected to a picket line that didn't keep anyone from entering a struck plant—that didn't even try! We would like to caution Drob against giving such lectures on picketing to auto workers in the city in which he lives, above all, during the impending strike.

But more is involved than this. Drob talks of the equal rights of unpopular minorities. He, who calls himself a socialist, puts on the same plane the rights —really the right to life and existence— of the working class and the vast majority of the people with the "rights" of the fascist scum, who, in the last analysis, represent the interests of a tiny ruling oligarchy. Who can recognize such an "equality"?

Listen to an ideological compatriot of Drob's: "The pickets took advantage [not exercised their right, but took advantage—M. H.] of the basic freedoms of speech and assemblage to assemble in front of the hall. Yet they sought to deny the same freedoms to the Smith meeting by forcibly excluding people from attending it." Who writes this? The ultra-reactionary *Detroit News* which is currently engaged in a campaign to discredit the wage increase demands of the CIO. The *News* continues with perfect logic, a logic which follows just as easily from Drob's position: "The police were not merely justified, but duty-bound in their use of force to oppose the forcible efforts of pickets to prevent the Smith meeting from being held." Why not, *if* the pickets are undemocratic, *if* they seek to deprive an "unpopular minority" of its democratic rights?

Does Drob, then, intend to do nothing to stop the fascists? Well, no; if he is pressed to the wall—and he means this literally—he will fight back.

> Obviously if a country is in a state of virtual civil war, as Germany was in 1931, 1932 and 1933, when the civil authorities were unable to prevent the fascists from breaking up the meetings of the democrats, the democrats are crazy to depend upon the authorities to maintain democracy.... But when the situation is perfectly well in hand, and the danger of a fascist like Smith ever achieving power, or even considerable influence, is remote, it is sheerest folly to conduct a civil war against him.

When to Attack Fascism

To accept such advice would be suicide for the working class and its organizations, as the example of Germany has

proved. What is suggested is that we remain quiet and peaceful while the fascist bands recruit and arm themselves. Then when *they* are ready for civil war, and when the working class has been weakened and softened by the Drobs who counselled patience, resist. It seems like elementary common sense to smash the fascists when they are weak and the working class is strong. To join battle at a time most favorable to the working class, not to its enemy, is to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and the danger of defeat. But then, Drob has taken a post-graduate course in Socialist Party anti-fascism and cannot bother with elementary common sense.

Before the civil war with a threatening fascism, Drob proposes reliance on authorities to maintain democracy, that is, reliance on the capitalist democratic state. This is the cry of all the liberals, "democrats" and reformists. It was this policy, carried out by Drob's ideological brothers, who headed the Socialist Parties of Germany and Italy, that left the working class of those countries defenseless against the onslaught of fascism. Can capitalist democracy defend society against fascism? Who are the "civil authorities" in the democratic capitalist countries? Leon Trotsky wrote in *Whither France:*

> The bourgeoisie is leading its society to complete bankruptcy. It is capable of assuring the people neither bread nor peace. This is precisely why it cannot any longer tolerate the democratic order. It is forced to smash the workers by the use of physical violence. The discontent of the workers and peasants, however, cannot be brought to an end by the police alone.... That is why finance capital is obliged to create special armed bands, trained to fight the workers just as certain breeds of dogs are trained to hunt game.

Fascism and the Democratic State

It is this that is at the root of the matter. The "democratic" authorities nurture and protect the fascists. They extend to them all their "rights" and more. *Both are responsible, in the last analysis, to the same master, finance capital.* When the need exists, one is retired and the other pushed to the fore. Capitalist democracy and fascism are both forms of political rule for the capitalist class. This, too, was demonstrated in the anti-Smith demonstrations. What were the police doing at the Detroit meeting? Protecting the fascists. Smith himself had a huge bodyguard of cops on the platform. For the workers outside, however, there were prepared riot squads, mounted police, tear gas. Smith was fully conscious of the rôle of the police. He addressed them specifically during his speech: "When you see that scum outside and these citizens here in this hall, you know where your interests lie."

Fascism feeds on capitalist democracy in crisis. It is because the people, and most especially the middle class, can see no way out of the crisis that they begin to turn to fascism. There is only one answer to fascism. Strike at the movement itself, but equally important, strike at the roots—rotting, decaying capitalism. Until the system that breeds wars, unemployment, mass misery is overthrown and a socialist society of peace and plenty is put in its place, there will be no peace with fascism. "Fascism comes," said Trotsky, "only when the working class shows complete incapacity to take into its own hands the fate of society." The liberals and the present labor leadership have not the slightest understanding of this. They shrink in fear when it is barely mentioned. They cling to capitalist democracy like a dog to the corpse of its dead master, and when fascism raises its head they whimper and they cry and call for Law and Order.

Organized labor can stop fascism. But only if it breaks with its compromising, vacillating leadership, only if it strikes out on the road of revolutionary socialism. Fascism is still weak in the United States; labor is on the offensive. There is still time to learn this lesson. But time runs out.

MARTIN HARVEY.

THE CHARACTER OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

As Foreseen by Plekhanov, Lenin and Trotsky

(The material here presented in article form is, perhaps, Leon Trotsky's best contribution toward clarifying the differences between the views held by himself and those of Lenin in the period before 1917 on the historical character of the Russian Revolution. First written for publication in a biography of Lenin, upon which Trotsky worked in the last years of his life, it was rewritten for publication in his biography of Stalin. The latter book has been suppressed as a result of the State Department's policy of placating the Kremlin dictator. We present this article on the 28th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution as a contribution toward the education of the new generation of Marxists on the historical roots of that great event. An additional article devoted to the Anniversary of the Russian Revolution planned for this issue has reached us too late to be included.—*Editors.*)

The revolution of 1905 became not only "the dress rehearsal of 1917" but also the laboratory from which emerged all the basic groupings of Russian political thought and where all tendencies and shadings within Russian Marxism took shape or were outlined. The center of the disputes and differences was naturally occupied by the question of the historical character of the Russian revolution and its future paths of development. In and of itself this war of conceptions and prognoses does not relate directly to the biography of Stalin, who took no independent part in it. Those few propaganda articles which he wrote on the subject are without the slightest theoretical interest. Scores of Bolsheviks, with pens in hand, popularized the very same ideas and did it much more ably. A critical exposition of the revolutionary conception of Bolshevism should, in the very nature of things, have entered into a biography of Lenin. However, theories have a fate of their own. If in the period of the first revolution and thereafter up to 1923, when revolutionary doctrines were elaborated and realized, Stalin held no independent position then, from 1924 on, the situation changes abruptly. There opens up the epoch of bureaucratic reaction and of drastic reviews of the past. The film of the revolution is run off in reverse. Old doctrines are submitted to new appraisals or new interpretations. Quite unexpectedly, at first sight, the center of attention is held by the conception of "the permanent revolution" as the fountainhead of all the blunderings of "Trotskyism." For a number of years thereafter, the criticism of this conception constitutes the main content of the theoretical—*sit venio verbo*—work of Stalin and his collaborators. It may be said that the whole of Stalinism, taken on the theo-

retical plane, grew out of the criticism of the theory of the permanent revolution as it was formulated in 1905. To this extent the exposition of this theory, as distinct from the theories of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, cannot fail to enter into this book, even if in the form of an appendix.

Russia's Combined Development

The development of Russia is characterized first of all by backwardness. Historical backwardness does not, however, signify a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, with merely a delay of one or two centuries. It engenders an entirely new "combined" social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating a peculiar interrelationship of classes. The same thing applies in the sphere of ideas. Precisely because of her historical tardiness, Russia turned out to be the only European country where Marxism as a doctrine and the Social Democracy as a party attained powerful development even before the bourgeois revolution. It is only natural that the problem of the correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism was submitted to the most profound theoretical analysis precisely in Russia.

Idealist-democrats, chiefly the Narodniks, refused superstitiously to recognize the impending revolution as bourgeois. They labelled it "democratic" seeking by means of a neutral political formula to mask its social content—not only from others but also from themselves. But in the struggle against Narodnikism, Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, established as long ago as the early 'eighties of the last century that Russia had no reason whatever to expect a privileged path of development, that like other "profane" nations, she would have to pass through the purgatory of capitalism and that precisely along this path she would acquire political freedom indispensable for the further struggle of the proletariat for socialism. Plekhanov not only separated the bourgeois revolution as a task from the socialist revolution—which he postponed to the indefinite future—but he depicted for each of these entirely different combinations of forces. Political freedom was to be achieved by the proletariat in alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie; after many decades and on a higher level of capitalist development, the proletariat would then carry out the socialist revolution in direct struggle against the bourgeoisie.

"To the Russian intellectual it always seems that to recognize our revolution as bourgeois is to discolor it, degrade it, debase it. . . . For the proletariat the struggle for political freedom and for the democratic republic in bourgeois society is simply a necessary stage in the struggle for the socialist revolution."

"Marxists are absolutely convinced," he wrote in 1905, "of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does this mean? This means that those democratic transformations . . . which have become indispensable for Russia do not, in and of themselves, signify the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of bourgeois rule, but on the contrary they clear the soil, for the first time and in a real way, for a broad and swift, for a European and not an Asiatic development of capitalism. They will make possible for the first time the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class. . . ."

"We cannot leap over the bourgeois democratic framework of the Russian revolution," he insisted, "but we can extend this framework to a colossal degree." That is to say, we can create within bourgeois society much more favorable conditions for the future struggle of the proletariat. Within these limits Lenin followed Plekhanov. The bourgeois character of the revolution served both factions of the Russian Social Democracy as their starting point.

It is quite natural that under these conditions, Koba (Stalin) did not go in his propaganda beyond those popular formulas which constitute the common property of Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks.

"The Constituent Assembly," he wrote in January 1905, "elected on the basis of equal, direct and secret universal suffrage—this is what we must now fight for! Only this Assembly will give us the democratic republic, so urgently needed by us for our struggle for socialism." The bourgeois republic as an arena for a protracted class struggle for the socialist goal—such is the perspective.

In 1907, i.e., after innumerable discussions in the press both in Petersburg and abroad and after a serious testing of theoretical prognoses in the experiences of the first revolution, Stalin wrote:

"That our revolution is bourgeois, that it must conclude by destroying the feudal and not the capitalist order, that it can be crowned only by the democratic republic—on this, it seems, all are agreed in our party." Stalin spoke not of what the revolution begins with, but of what it ends with, and he limited it in advance and quite categorically to "only the democratic republic." We would seek in vain in his writings for even a hint of any perspective of a socialist revolution in connection with a democratic overturn. This remained his position even at the beginning of the February revolution in 1917 up to Lenin's arrival in Petersburg.

The Menshevik View

For Plekhanov, Axelrod and the leaders of Menshevism in general, the sociological characterization of the revolution as bourgeois was valuable politically above all because in advance it prohibited provoking the bourgeoisie by the specter of socialism and "repelling" it into the camp of reaction. "The social relations of Russia have ripened only for the bourgeois revolution," said the chief tactician of Menshevism, Axelrod, at the Unity Congress. "In the face of the universal deprivation of political rights in our country there cannot even be talk of a direct battle between the proletariat and other classes for political power. . . . The proletariat is fighting for conditions of bourgeois development. The objective historical conditions make it the destiny of our proletariat to inescapably collaborate with the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the common enemy." The content of the Russian revolution was therewith limited in advance to those transformations which are compatible with the interests and views of the liberal bourgeoisie.

It is precisely at this point that the basic disagreement between the two factions begins. Bolshevism absolutely refused to recognize that the Russian bourgeoisie was capable of leading its own revolution to the end. With infinitely greater power and consistency than Plekhanov, Lenin advanced the agrarian question as the central problem of the democratic overturn in Russia. "The crux of the Russian revolution," he repeated, "is the agrarian (land) question. Conclusions concerning the defeat or victory of the revolution must be based . . . on the calculation of the condition of the masses in the struggle for land." Together with Plekhanov, Lenin viewed the peas-

antry as a petty-bourgeois class; the peasant land program as a program of bourgeois progress. "Nationalization is a bourgeois measure," he insisted at the Unity Congress. "It will give an impulse to the development of capitalism; it will sharpen the class struggle, strengthen the mobilization of the land, cause an influx of capital into agriculture, lower the price of grain." Notwithstanding the indubitable bourgeois character of the agrarian revolution the Russian bourgeoisie remains, however, hostile to the expropriation of landed estates and precisely for this reason strives toward a compromise with the monarchy on the basis of a constitution on the Prussian pattern. To Plekhanov's idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie Lenin counterposed the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. The task of the revolutionary collaboration of these two classes he proclaimed to be the establishment of a "democratic dictatorship," as the only means of radically cleansing Russia of feudal rubbish, of creating a free farmers' system and clearing the road for the development of capitalism along American and not Prussian lines.

The victory of the revolution, he wrote, can be crowned "only by a dictatorship because the accomplishment of transformations immediately and urgently needed by the proletariat and the peasantry will evoke the desperate resistance of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie and Czarism. Without the dictatorship it will be impossible to break the resistance, and repel the counter-revolutionary attempts. But this will of course be not a socialist but a democratic dictatorship. It will not be able to touch (without a whole series of transitional stages of revolutionary development) the foundations of capitalism. It will be able, in the best case, to realize a radical redivision of landed property in favor of the peasantry, introduce a consistent and full democratism up to instituting the republic, root out all Asiatic and feudal features not only from the day-to-day life of the village but also of the factory, put a beginning to a serious improvement of workers' conditions and raise their living standards and, last but not least, carry over the revolutionary conflagration to Europe."

Vulnerability of Lenin's Position

Lenin's conception represented an enormous step forward insofar as it proceeded not from constitutional reforms but from the agrarian overturn as the central task of the revolution and singled out the only realistic combination of social forces for its accomplishment. The weak point of Lenin's conception, however, was the internally contradictory idea of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry." Lenin himself underscored the fundamental limitation of this "dictatorship" when he openly called it *bourgeois*. By this he meant to say that for the sake of preserving its alliance with the peasantry the proletariat would in the coming revolution have to forego the direct posing of the socialist tasks. But this would signify the renunciation by the proletariat of its *own* dictatorship. Consequently, the gist of the matter involved the dictatorship of the peasantry even if with the participation of the workers. On certain occasions Lenin said just this. For example, at the Stockholm Conference, in refuting Plekhanov who came out against the "utopia" of the seizure of power, Lenin said: "What program is under discussion? The agrarian. Who is assumed to seize power under this program? The revolutionary peasantry. Is Lenin mixing up the power of the proletariat with this peasantry?" No, he says referring to himself: Lenin sharply differentiates the socialist power of the proletariat from the bourgeois democratic power of the peasantry. "But how," he exclaims again, "is a victorious peasant revolution possible without the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry?" In this polemical formula Lenin reveals with special clarity the vulnerability of his position.

The peasantry is dispersed over the surface of an enormous country whose key junctions are the cities. The peasantry itself is incapable of even formulating its own interests inasmuch as in each district these appear differently. The economic link between the provinces is created by the market and the railways but both the market and the railways are in the hands of the cities. In seeking to tear itself away from the restrictions of the village and to generalize its own interests, the peasantry inescapably falls into political dependence upon the city. Finally, the peasantry is heterogeneous in its social relations as well: the kulak stratum naturally seeks to swing it to an alliance with the urban bourgeoisie while the nether strata of the village pull to the side of the urban workers. Under these conditions the peasantry as such is completely incapable of conquering power.

True enough, in ancient China, revolutions placed the peasantry in power or, more precisely, placed the military leaders of peasant uprisings in power. This led each time to a redivision of the land and the establishment of a new "peasant" dynasty, whereupon history would begin from the beginning; with a new concentration of usury, and a new uprising. So long as the revolution preserves its purely peasant character society is incapable of emerging from these hopeless and vicious circles. This was the basis of ancient Asiatic history, including ancient Russian history. In Europe beginning with the close of the Middle Ages each victorious peasant uprising placed in power not a peasant government but a left urban party. To put it more precisely, a peasant uprising turned out victorious exactly to the degree to which it succeeded in strengthening the position of the revolutionary section of the urban population. In bourgeois Russia of the twentieth century these could not even be talk of the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry.

Attitude Toward Liberalism

The attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie was, as has been said, the touchstone of the differentiation between revolutionists and opportunists in the ranks of the social democrats. How far could the Russian revolution go? What would be the character of the future revolutionary Provisional Government? What tasks would confront it? And in what order? These questions with all their importance could be correctly posed only on the basis of the fundamental character of the policy of the proletariat, and the character of this policy was in turn determined first of all by the attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie. Plekhanov obviously and stubbornly shut his eyes to the fundamental conclusion of the political history of the 19th century: Whenever the proletariat comes forward as an independent force the bourgeoisie shifts over to the camp of the counter-revolution. The more audacious the mass struggle all the swifter is the reactionary degeneration of liberalism. No one has yet invented a means for paralyzing the effects of the law of the class struggle.

"We must cherish the support of non-proletarian parties," repeated Plekhanov during the years of the first revolution, "and not repel them from us by tactless actions." By monotonous preachments of this sort, the philosopher of Marxism indicated that the living dynamics of society was unattainable to him. "Tactlessness" can repel an individual sensitive in-

tellectual. Classes and parties are attracted or repelled by social interests. "It can be stated with certainty," replied Lenin to Plekhanov, "that the liberals and landlords will forgive you millions of 'tactless acts' but will not forgive you a summons to take away the land." And not only the landlords. The tops of the bourgeoisie are bound up with the landowners by the unity of property interests, and more narrowly by the system of banks. The tops of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are materially and morally dependent upon the big and middle proprietors—they are all afraid of the independent mass movement. Meanwhile, in order to overthrow Czarism, it was necessary to rouse tens upon tens of millions of oppressed to a heroic, self-renouncing, unfettered revolutionary assault that would halt at nothing. The masses can rise to an insurrection only under the banner of their own interests and consequently in the spirit of irreconcilable hostility toward the exploiting classes beginning with the landlords. The "repulsion" of the oppositional bourgeoisie away from the revolutionary workers and peasants was therefore the immanent law of the revolution itself and could not be avoided by means of diplomacy or "tact."

Each additional month confirmed the Leninist appraisal of liberalism. Contrary to the best hopes of the Mensheviks, the Cadets not only did not prepare to take their place at the head of the "bourgeois" revolution but on the contrary they found their historical mission more and more in the struggle against it.

After the crushing of the December uprising the liberals, who occupied the political limelight thanks to the ephemeral Duma, sought with all their might to justify themselves before the monarchy and explain away their insufficiently active counter-revolutionary conduct in the autumn of 1905 when danger threatened the most sacred props of "culture." The leader of the liberals, Miliukov, who conducted the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Winter Palace, quite correctly proved in the press that at the end of 1905 the Cadets could not even show themselves before the masses. "Those who now chide the (Cadet) party," he wrote, "because it did not protest at the time by arranging meetings against the revolutionary illusions of Trotskyism . . . simply do not understand or do not remember the moods prevailing at the time among the democratic public gatherings at meetings." By the "illusions of Trotskyism" the liberal leader understood the independent policy of the proletariat which attracted to the soviets the sympathies of the nethermost layers in the cities, of the soldiers, peasants, and all the oppressed, and which owing to this repelled the "educated society." The evolution of the Mensheviks unfolded along parallel lines. They had to justify themselves more and more frequently before the liberals, because they had turned out in a bloc with Trotsky after October 1905. The explanations of Martov, the talented publicist of the Mensheviks, came down to this, that it was necessary to make concessions to the "revolutionary illusions" of the masses.

Stalin's Part in the Dispute

In Tiflis the political groupings took shape on the same principled basis as in Petersburg. "To smash reaction," wrote the leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, "to conquer and carry through the Constitution—this will depend upon the conscious unification and the striving for a single goal on the part of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. . . . It is true that the peasantry will be drawn into the movement, investing it with an elemental character, but the decisive role will nevertheless be played by these two classes while the peasant movement will add grist to their mill." Lenin mocked at the fears of Zhordanya that an irreconcilable policy toward the bourgeoisie would doom the workers to impotence. Zhordanya "discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic overturn and forgets . . . about the peasantry! Of all the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and is enamoured of the landlord-liberals. And he does not know the peasants. And this in the Caucasus!" The refutations of Lenin while correct in essence simplify the problem on one point. Zhordanya did not "froget" about the peasantry and, as may be gathered from the hint of Lenin himself, could not have possibly forgotten about it in the Caucasus where the peasantry was stormily rising at the time under the banner of the Mensheviks. Zhordanya saw in the peasantry, however, not so much a political ally as a historical battering ram which could and should be utilized by the bourgeoisie in alliance with the proletariat. He did not believe that the peasantry was capable of becoming a leading or even an independent force in the revolution and in this he was not wrong; but he also did not believe that the proletariat was capable of leading the peasant uprising to victory—and in this was his fatal mistake. The Menshevik idea of the alliance of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie actually signified the subjection to the liberals of both the workers and the peasants. The reactionary utopianism of this program was determined by the fact that the far advanced dismemberment of the classes paralyzed the bourgeoisie in advance as a revolutionary factor. In this fundamental question the right was wholly on the side of Bolshevism: the chase after an alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie would inescapably counterpose the Social Democracy to the revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. In 1905 the Mensheviks still lacked courage to draw all the necessary conclusions from their theory of the "bourgeois" revolution. In 1917 they drew their ideas to their logical conclusion and broke their heads.

On the question of the attitude to the liberals, Stalin stood during the years of the first revolution on Lenin's side. It must be stated that during this period even the majority of the rank-and-file Mensheviks were closer to Lenin than to Plekhanov on issues touching the oppositional bourgeoisie. A contemptuous attitude to the liberals was the literary tradition of intellectual radicalism. One would however labor in vain to seek from Koba an independent contribution on this question, an analysis of the Caucasian social relations, new arguments or even a new formulation of old arguments. The leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, was far more independent in relation to Plekhanov than Stalin was in relation to Lenin. "In vain the Messrs. Liberals seek," wrote Koba after January 9, "to save the tottering throne of the Czar. In vain are they extending to the Czar the hand of assistance! . . . The aroused popular masses are preparing for the revolution and not for reconciliation with the Czar. . . . Yes, gentlemen, in vain are your efforts. The Russian revolution is inevitable and it is as inevitable as the inevitable rising of the sun! Can you stop the rising sun? That is the question!" And so forth and so on. Higher than this Koba did not rise. Two and a half years later, in repeating Lenin almost literally, he wrote: "The Russian liberal bourgeoisie is anti-revolutionary. It cannot be the motive force, nor, all the less so, the leader of the revolution. It is the sworn enemy of the revolution and a stubborn struggle must be waged against it." However, it was precisely in this fundamental question that Stalin was to undergo a complete metamorphosis in the next ten years and

was to meet the February revolution of 1917 already as a partisan of a bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie and, in accordance with this, as a champion of uniting with the Mensheviks into one party. Only Lenin on arriving from abroad put an abrupt end to the independent policy of Stalin which he called a mockery of Marxism.

On the Role of the Peasantry

The Narodniks saw in the workers and peasants simply "toilers" and "the exploited" who are all equally interested in socialism. Marxists regarded the peasant as a petty bourgeois who is capable of becoming a socialist only to the extent to which he ceases materially or spiritually to be a peasant. With the sentimentalism peculiar to them, the Narodniks perceived in this sociological characterization a moral slur against the peasantry. Along this line occurred for two generations the main struggle between the revolutionary tendencies of Russia. To understand the future disputes between Stalinism and Trotskyism it is necessary once again to emphasize that, in accordance with the entire tradition of Marxism, Lenin never for a moment regarded the peasantry as a socialist ally of the proletariat. On the contrary, the impossibility of the socialist revolution in Russia was deduced by him precisely from the collosal preponderance of the peasantry. This idea runs through all his articles which touch directly or indirectly upon the agrarian question.

"We support the peasant movement," wrote Lenin in September 1905, "to the extent that it is a revolutionary democratic movement. We are preparing (right now, and immediately) for a struggle with it to the extent that it will come forward as a reactionary, anti-proletarian movement. The entire gist of Marxism lies in this two-fold task. . . ." Lenin saw the socialist ally in the Western proletariat and partly in the semi-proletarian elements in the Russian village but never in the peasantry as such. "From the beginning we support to the very end, by means of all measures, up to confiscation," he repeated with the insistence peculiar to him, "the peasant in general against the landlord, and later (and not even later but at the very same time) we support the proletariat against the peasant in general."

"The peasantry will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution," he wrote in March 1906, "and with this it will completely exhaust its revolutionary spirit as the peasantry. The proletariat will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and with this it will only unfold in a real way its genuine socialist revolutionary spirit." "The movement of the peasantry," he repeated in May of the same year, "is the movement of a different class. This is a struggle not against the foundations of capitalism but for purging all the remnants of feudalism." This viewpoint can be followed in Lenin from one article to the next, year by year, volume by volume. The language and examples vary, the basic thought remains the same. It could not have been otherwise. Had Lenin seen a *socialist* ally in the peasantry he would not have had the slightest ground for insisting upon the *bourgeois* character of the revolution and for limiting "the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" to purely democratic tasks. In those cases where Lenin accused the author of this book of "under-estimating" the peasantry he had in mind not at all my non-recognition of the socialist tendencies of the peasantry but, on the contrary, my inadequate—from Lenin's viewpoint—recognition of the bourgeois-democratic independence of the peasantry, its ability to create its *own* power and thereby prevent the establishment of the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat.

The re-evaluation of values on this question was opened up only in the years of Thermidorian reaction the beginning of which coincided approximately with the illness and death of Lenin. Thenceforth the alliance of Russian workers and peasants was proclaimed to be, in and of itself, a sufficient guarantee against the dangers of restoration and an immutable pledge of the realization of socialism within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. Replacing the theory of socialism in one country Stalin began to designate the Marxist evaluation of the peasantry not otherwise than as "Trotskyism" and, moreover, not only in relation to the present but to the entire past.

It is, of course, possible to raise the question whether or not the classic Marxist view of the peasantry has been proven erroneous. This subject would lead us far beyond the limits of the present review. Suffice it to state here that Marxism has never invested its estimation of the peasantry as a non-socialist class with an absolute and static character. Marx himself said that the peasant possesses not only superstitions but the ability to reason. In changing conditions the nature of the peasant himself changes. The regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened up very broad possibilities for influencing the peasantry and re-educating it. The limits of these possibilities have not yet been exhausted by history. Nevertheless, it is now already clear that the growing role of the state coercion in the USSR has not refuted but has confirmed fundamentally the attitude toward the peasantry which distinguished Russian Marxists from the Narodniks. However, whatever may be the situation in this respect today after twenty years of the new regime, it remains indubitable that up to the October revolution or more correctly up to 1924 no one in the Marxist camp—Lenin, least of all—saw in the peasantry a socialist factor of development. Without the aid of the proletarian revolution in the West, Lenin repeated, restoration in Russia was inevitable. He was not mistaken: the Stalinist bureaucracy is nothing else than the first phase of bourgeois restoration.

Trotsky Holds Third Position

We have analyzed above the points of departure of the two basic factions of the Russian Social Democracy. But alongside of them, already at the dawn of the first revolution, was formulated a third position which met with almost no recognition during those years but which we are obliged to set down here with the necessary completeness not only because it found its confirmation in the events of 1917 but especially because seven years after the October revolution, this conception, after being turned topsy-turvy, began to play a completely unforeseen role in the political evolution of Stalin and the whole Soviet bureaucracy.

At the beginning of 1905 a pamphlet by Trotsky was issued in Geneva. This pamphlet analyzed the political situation as it unfolded in the winter of 1904. The author arrived at the conclusion that the independent campaign of petitions and banquets by the liberals had exhausted all its possibilities; that the radical intelligentsia who had pinned their hopes upon the liberals had arrived in a blind alley together with the latter; that the peasant movement was creating favorable conditions for victory but was incapable of assuring it; that a decision could be reached only through the armed uprising of the proletariat; that the next phase on this path would be the general strike. The pamphlet was entitled "Before the

Ninth of January," because it was written before the Bloody Sunday in Peersburg. The mighty strike wave which came after this date together with the initial armed clashes which supplemented this strike wave were an unequivocal confirmation of the strategic prognosis of this pamphlet.

The introduction to my work was written by Parvus, a Russian emigre, who had succeeded by that time in becoming a prominent German writer. Parvus was an exceptional creative personality capable of becoming infected with the ideas of others as well as of enriching others by his ideas. He lacked internal equilibrium and sufficient love for work to give the labor movement the contribution worthy of his talents as thinker and writer. On my personal development he exercised undoubted influence especially in regard to the social-revolutionary understanding of our epoch. A few years prior to our first meeting Parvus passionately defended the idea of a general strike in Germany; but the country was then passing through a prolonged industrial boom, the Social Democracy had adapted itself to the regime of the Hohenzollerns; the revolutionary propaganda of a foreigner met with nothing except ironical indifference. On becoming acquainted on the second day after the bloody events in Petersburg with my pamphlet, then in manuscript, Parvus was captured by the idea of the exceptional role which the proletariat of backward Russia was destined to play.

Those few days which we spent together in Munich were filled with conversations which clarified a good deal for both of us and which brought us personally closer together. The introduction which Parvus wrote at the time for the pamphlet has entered firmly into the history of the Russian revolution. In a few pages he illuminated those social peculiarities of belated Russia which were, it is true, known previously but from which no one had drawn all the necessary conclusions.

The political radicalism of Western Europe, wrote Parvus, was, as is well known, based primarily on the petty bourgeoisie. These were the handicraft workers and, in general, that section of the bourgeoisie which had been caught up by the industrial development but was at the same time pushed aside by the capitalist class. . . . In Russia, during the pre-capitalist period, the cities developed more along Chinese than European lines. These were administrative centers, purely functionary in character, without the slightest political significance, while in terms of economic relations they served as trading centers, bazaars, for the surrounding landlord and peasant milieu. Their development was still very insignificant when it was halted by the capitalist process which began to create big cities after its own pattern, i.e., factory cities and centers of world trade. . . . The very same thing that hindered the development of petty-bourgeois democracy served to benefit the class consciousness of the proletariat in Russia, namely, the weak development of the handicraft form of production. The proletariat was immediately concentrated in the factories. . . .

The peasants will be drawn into the movement in ever larger masses. But they are capable only of increasing the political anarchy in the country and, in this way, of weakening the government; they cannot compose a tightly welded revolutionary army. With the development of the revolution, therefore, an ever greater amount of political work will fall to the share of the proletariat. Along with this, its political self-consciousness will broaden, its political energy will grow. . . .

The Social Democracy will be confronted with the dilemma: either to assume the responsibility for the Provisional Government or to stand aside from the workers' movement. The workers will consider this government as their own regardless of how the Social Democracy conducts itself. . . . The revolutionary overturn in Russia can be accomplished only by the workers. The revolutionary Provisional Government in Russia will be the government of a *workers' democracy*. If the Social Democracy heads the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, then this government will be Social Democratic. . . .

The Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia but the very process of liquidating the autocracy and of establishing the democratic republic will provide it with a rich soil for political work.

In the heat of the revolutionary events in the autumn of 1905, I once again met Parvus, this time in Petersburg. While preserving an organizational independence from both factions, we jointly edited a mass workers paper, *Russkoye Slovo,* and, in a coalition with the Mensheviks, a big political newspaper, *Nachalo.* The theory of the permanent revolution has usually been linked with the names of "Parvus and Trotsky." This was only partially correct. The period of Parvus' revolutionary apogee belongs to the end of the last century when he marched at the head of the struggle against the so-called "revisionism," i.e., the opportunist distortion of Marx's theory. The failure of the attempts to push the German Social Democracy on the path of more resolute policies undermined his optimism. Toward the perspective of the socialist revolution in the West, Parvus began to react with more and more reservations. He considered at that time that the "Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia." His prognoses indicated, therefore, not the transformation of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution but only the establishment in Russia of a regime of workers' democracy of the Australian type, where on the basis of a farmers' system there arose for the first time a labor government which did not go beyond the framework of a bourgeois regime.

This conclusion was not shared by me. The Australian democracy grew organically from the virgin soil of a new continent and at once assumed a conservative character and subjected to itself a young but quite privileged proletariat. Russian democracy, on the contrary, could arise only as a result of a grandiose revolutionary overturn, the dynamics of which would in no case permit the workers' government to remain within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Our differences, which began shortly after the revolution of 1905, resulted in a complete break between us at the beginning of the war when Parvus, in whom the skeptic had completely killed the revolutionist, turned out on the side of German imperialism, and later became the counsellor and inspirer of the first president of the German republic, Ebert.

The Theory of Permanent Revolution

Beginning with the pamphlet, "Before the Ninth of January," I returned more than once to the development and justification of the theory of the permanent revolution. In view of the importance which this theory later acquired in the ideological evolution of the hero of this biography, it is necessary to present it here in the form of exact quotations from my works in 1905-06:

The core of the population of a modern city, at least in cities of economic-political significance, is constituted by the sharply differentiated class of wage labor. It is precisely this class, essentially unknown during the Great French Revolution, that is destined to play the decisive role in our revolution. . . . In a country economically more backward, the proletariat may come to power sooner than in an advanced capitalist country. The assumption of some sort of automatic dependence of proletarian dictatorship upon the technical forces and resources of a country is a prejudice derived from an extremely oversimplified "economic" materialism. Such a view has nothing in common with Marxism. . . . Notwithstanding that the productive forces of industry in the United States are ten times higher than ours, the political role of the Russian proletariat, its influence upon the politics of the country, and the possibility of its coming influence upon world politics is

incomparably higher than the role and significance of the American proletariat. . . .

The Russian revolution, according to our view, will create conditions in which the power may (and with the victory of the revolution *must*) pass into the hands of the proletariat before the politicians of bourgeois liberalism get a chance to develop their statesmanly genius to the full. . . . The Russian bourgeoisie is surrendering all the revolutionary positions to the proletariat. It will have to surrender likewise the revolutionary leadership of the peasantry. The proletariat in power will appear to the peasantry as an emancipator class. . . . The proletariat basing itself on the peasantry will bring all its forces into play to raise the cultural level of the village and develop a political consciousness in the peasantry. . . . But perhaps the peasantry itself will crowd the proletariat and occupy its place? This is impossible. All the experience of history protests against this assumption. It shows that the peasantry is completely incapable of playing an *independent* political role. . . . From what has been said it is clear how we regard the idea of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.' The gist of the matter is not whether we consider it admissible in principle, whether we find this form of political cooperation 'desirable.' We consider it unrealizable—at least in the direct and immediate sense. . . .

The foregoing already demonstrates how erroneous is the assertion, later endlessly repeated, that the conception presented here "leaped over the bourgeois revolution." "The struggle for the democratic renovation of Russia," I wrote at that time, "has wholly grown out of capitalism and is being conducted by the forces unfolding on the basis of capitalism and is being aimed *directly and first of all* against the feudal-serf obstacles on the path of the development of capitalist society." The question, however, was: Just what forces and methods are capable of removing these obstacles?

We may set a bound to all the questions of the revolution by asserting that our revolution is *bourgeois* in its objective aims, and therefore in its inevitable results, and we may thus shut our eyes to the fact that the chief agent of this bourgeois revolution is the proletariat, and the proletariat will be pushed toward power by the whole course of the revolution. . . . You may lull yourself with the thought that the social conditions of Russia are not yet ripe for a socialist economy—and therewith you may neglect to consider the fact that the proletariat ,once in power, will inevitably be compelled by the whole logic of its situation to introduce an economy operated by the state. . . . Entering the government not as impotent hostages but as a ruling power, the representatives of the proletariat will by this very act destroy the boundary between minimum and maximum program, i.e., *place collectivism on the order of the day.* At what point the proletariat will be stopped in this direction will depend on the relationship of forces, but not at all upon the original intentions of the party of the proletariat.

But it is not too early now to pose the question: Must this dictatorship of the proletariat inevitably be shattered against the framework of the bourgeois revolution? Or may it not, upon the given *world-historic foundations,* open before itself the prospect of victory to be achieved by shattering this limited framework? . . . One thing can be stated with certainty: Without direct state support from the European proletariat the working class of Russia cannot remain in power and cannot convert its temporary rule into a prolonged socialist dictatorship. . . ." From this, however, does not at all flow a pessimistic prognosis: "The political emancipation led by the working class of Russia raises this leader to unprecedented historical heights, transfers into its hands colossal forces and resources and makes it the initiator of the world liquidation of capitalism, for which history has created all the necessary objective prerequisites. . . .

In regard to the degree to which the international Social Democracy will prove able to fulfill its revolutionary task, I wrote in 1906:

The European socialist parties—above all, the mightiest among them, the German party—have each worked out their own conservatism. As greater and greater masses rally to socialism and as ance that the "Eastern revolution will imbue the West proletariat with revolutionary idealism and engender in it the desire to speak to its enemy in 'Russian'. . . ."

as an organization embodying the political experience of the proletariat, may become at a certain moment a direct obstacle in the path of the open conflict between the workers and bourgeois reaction. . . ." I concluded my analysis, however, by expressing assurance that the "Eastern revolutionary idealism and engender in it the desire to speak to its enemy in 'Russian'. . . .

The Three Views Summed Up

Let us sum up. Narodnikism, in the wake of the Slavophiles, proceeded from illusions concerning the absolutely original paths of Russia's development, and waved aside capitalism and the bourgeois republic. Plekhanov's Marxism was concentrated on proving the principled identity of the historical paths of Russia and of the West. The program derived from this ignored the wholly real and not at all mystical peculiarities of Russia's social structure and of her revolutionary development. The Menshevik attitude toward the revolution, stripped of episodic encrustations and individual deviations, is reducible to the following: The victory of the Russian bourgeois revolution is conceivable only under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie and must hand over power to the latter. The democratic regime will then permit the Russian proletariat to catch up with its older Western brothers on the road of the struggle for socialism with incomparably greater success than hitherto.

Lenin's perspective may be briefly expressed as follows: The belated Russian bourgeoisie is incapable of leading its own revolution to the end. The complete victory of the revolution through the medium of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" will purge the country of medievalism, invest the development of Russian capitalism with American tempos, strengthen the proletariat in the city and country, and open up broad possibilities for the struggle for socialism. On the other hand, the victory of the Russian revolution will provide a mighty impulse for the socialist revolution in the West, and the latter will not only shield Russia from the dangers of restoration but also permit the Russian proletariat to reach the conquest of power in a comparatively short historical interval.

The perspective of the permanent revolution may be summed up in these words: The complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is inconceivable otherwise than in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat basing itself on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which will inescapably place on the order of the day not only democratic but also socialist tasks, will at the same time provide a mighty impulse to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West will shield Russia from bourgeois restoration and secure for her the possibility of bringing the socialist construction to its conclusion.

These terse formulations reveal with equal clarity both the homogeneity of the last two conceptions in their irreconcilable contradiction with the liberal-Menshevist perspective as well as their extremely essential difference from one another on the question of the social character and the tasks of the "dictatorship" which was to grow out of the revolution. The frequently repeated objection of the present Moscow theoreticians to the effect that the program of the dictatorship of the proletariat was "premature" in 1905 is entirely lacking in content. In the empirical sense the program of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry proved to be equally "premature." The unfavorable relation of forces in the epoch of the first revolution rendered impossible not the dictatorship of the proletariat as such but, in general, the

victory of the revolution itself. Meanwhile all the revolutionary tendencies proceeded from the hopes for a complete victory; without such a hope an unfettered revolutionary struggle would be impossible. The differences involved the general perspectives of the revolution and the strategy flowing therefrom. The perspective of Menshevism was false to the core: it pointed out an entirely different road for the proletariat. The perspective of Bolshevism was not complete: it indicated correctly the general direction of the struggle but characterized its stages incorrectly. The inadequacy of the perspective of Bolshevism was not revealed in 1905 only because the revolution itself did not receive further development. But at the beginning of 1917 Lenin was compelled, in a direct struggle against the oldest cadres of the party, to change the perspective.

A political prognosis cannot pretend to the same exactness as an astronomical one. It suffices if it gives a correct indication of the general line of development and helps to orient oneself in the actual course of events in which the basic line is inevitably shifted either to the right or to the left. In this sense it is impossible not to recognize that the conception of the permanent revolution has fully passed the test of history. In the first years of the Soviet regime, this was denied by none; on the contrary, this fact met with recognition in a number of official publications. But when on the quiescent and ossified summits of Soviet society the bureaucratic reaction against October opened up, it was from the very beginning directed against this theory which more completely than any other reflected the first proletarian revolution in history and at the same time clearly revealed its incomplete, limited and partial character. Thus, by way of repulsion, originated the theory of socialism in one country, the basic dogma of Stalinism. *Summer*, 1939.

LEON TROTSKY.

DOCUMENTS ON WP-SWP UNITY

SWP Majority and Minority Viewpoints

October 10, 1945

Max Shachtman, National Secretary
Workers Party
New York, N. Y.

Dear Comrade:

Your two letters dated September 15 and October 4, together with the resolution of your Active Workers Conference as well as a report of the oral discussions between the sub-committee of our PC and a corresponding sub-committee of your organization were submitted and discussed at the Plenum of the National Committee held October 6 and 7.

I am sending you herewith a copy of the resolution adopted by the Plenum.

Yours fraternally,
J. P. CANNON,
National Secretary.

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1. The proposal for unification made by the Workers Party to the Socialist Workers Party comes after more than five years of bitter hostility and struggle between the two organizations.

2. The split in 1940 was preceded by a protracted factional fight which involved not only the position of the Fourth International on the Russian question but the most fundamental questions of our movement: Marxist theory, tradition, political program, methods of party-building, the party régime, etc. The issues in this historic struggle have been explained and amply documented in the two books: *In Defense of Marxism* and *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party.*

3. Our characterization of the petty bourgeois tendency represented by the faction which later became the WP was not predicated solely upon their view of the nature of the USSR and their attitude toward its defense but upon their rejection of the theory, methods and traditions of Marxism, a rejection which was rooted in their social composition and direction. Trotsky wrote: "We, too, have attempted above to prove that the issue concerns not only the Russian problems but *even more* the opposition's method of thought, which has its social roots. The opposition is under the sway of petty bourgeois moods and tendencies. This is the essence of the whole matter." (*In Defense of Marxism*, page 59, our italics.)

The 1940 Split

4. The 1940 split which gave birth to the WP was a heavy blow aimed at the Trotskyist movement in the United States and throughout the world. The petty bourgeois faction split our party at a time of grave social tension and crisis preceding the entry of the United States into the war, when every revolutionist had the responsibility of remaining at his post and adhering without compromise to the positions of the Fourth International. This split broke away forty per cent of the membership from our party and served to disorient and miseducate many potentially excellent revolutionists. During the ensuing five years the WP has pursued the policy of irreconcilable antagonism toward the SWP with the object of discrediting, undermining and overthrowing it as the vanguard of the American working class.

5. Despite this, the SWP has not only recouped the numerical losses suffered in the split, but under the adverse conditions of the war has made considerable gains in numbers, influence and prestige. It has become genuinely proletarian both in membership and in its predominant leadership. It is deeply rooted in the mass labor movement. Its ranks have become ideologically homogeneous and steeled in the fires of the class struggle.

6. As a result of the successes scored and the experiences undergone during the war, the ranks of the SWP face the coming period with unlimited confidence in the prospects of the party and its eventual development into the mass revolutionary party of the American workers. The objective conditions are extremely favorable for the rapid growth of our party. The profound revulsion of the peoples all over the world against the consequences of war; the resultant radicalization of the masses; the growing militancy of the American workers expressed in the present national strike wave —are bound to accelerate the expansion of our party in all spheres. The response of the workers to *The Militant*, the steadily rising rate of recruitment, the establishment of new branches, and the extension of our influence in the key unions are sure signs of this trend.

7. The Workers Party, by contrast, has shown no ability to grow and attract workers in significant numbers. It has gained no significant influence in the labor movement. The disproportion in the numerical strength of the two parties is growing from month to month.

8. After more than five years of warfare against the SWP in an attempt to supplant it, the Workers Party has come forward with the proposal for uniting the two organizations. This action marks a significant turn in their policy and opens a new stage in the relations between the two tendencies.

SWP Willing to Consider

9. In view of this change in the situation, the Political Committee of the SWP expressed its willingness to consider and discuss the question of unification in all its aspects. Its reply of August 27, 1945, to the letter of the WP stated that "unity would be a good thing if it is firmly based and leads to the strengthening of the party and the building up of the party. On the other hand, a unification followed by a sharp faction fight and another split would be highly injurious to the party."

10. Unifications, like splits, are the most serious steps in the life of a revolutionary party. Neither the one nor the other should

be undertaken light-mindedly or precipitately, without the most scrupulous survey of all the circumstances and the most careful calculation of the consequences. The advantages and disadvantages of such a move must be carefully appraised in the light of the tasks and perspectives of the party at the given stage of its development. A poorly prepared and ill-considered unification could easily paralyze the work of the party, provoke a new outburst of factional animosity and lead toward a new split.

11. The PC pointed out in its letter: "We have always proceeded from the point of view that programmatic agreement on the most important and decisive questions is the only sound basis for unification." That has been the basis of all previous unifications in the Marxist movement. It is clear that such a basis for unification does not exist in the present instance. Both parties acknowledge that the programmatic differences which led to the 1940 split have not been moderated but that, on the contrary, some of them have been deepened and new important points of divergence have developed in the interim.

WP a Distinct Tendency

12. Thus we are confronted by the proposition of uniting into a common organization two tendencies with sharply divergent political points of view on many questions and sharply conflicting theories of party organization. This proposed unity without programmatic agreement, in fact with acknowledged disagreements between the two tendencies, has no precedent, so far as we know in the history of the international Marxist movement. In preliminary discussions between representative sub-committees of the two organizations, the delegates of the WP emphasized their intention to come into the united party as a separate and distinct tendency. They stated, furthermore, that they would insist on the right to publish their own discussion bulletin under their own control.

13. Can we contemplate, nevertheless, a unification of the two organizations despite the important differences that exist on political and organizational questions? In other words, are the differences compatible inside of one Leninist party? We have taken the position that this question cannot be determined by any abstract rule, it can only be answered *concretely*. Five years ago, the faction which later became the Workers Party decided that the differences were not compatible with remaining inside the SWP. In the five years that have elapsed, life again proved the differences incompatible, as the WP carried on unremitting warfare against our organization, our principles, our methods, our leadership. Has the WP sufficiently changed to make these differences compatible inside our party today? In other words, can a genuine unity be effected with the WP, as distinct from a purely formal unity which would actually mean two parties under one roof with a new split in prospect? *This can only be answered with sufficient concreteness after the most thorough-going discussion and probing of all differences to the bottom.*

14. The extraordinary nature of this unity proposal makes it all the more imperative that all the programmatic questions in dispute be thoroughly clarified and all the differences between the two parties probed to the depth so that not the slightest ambiguity remains. This preliminary work of ideological clarification and demarcation is the indispensable precondition for any definitive disposition of the proposal for unity and a correct settlement of the relations between the SWP and WP.

15. To this end, this Plenum of the National Committee convened for the special purpose of considering this question therefore resolves:

a) To endorse the letter and actions of the Political Committee in response to the letter from the WP;

b) To authorize the Political Committee to prepare and carry through a thorough discussion and clarification of the theoretical, political and organizational issues in dispute, and fix the position of the party precisely on every point in preparation for the consideration and action of the next party convention;

c) To reject any united front for propaganda. The SWP must continue to conduct its propagandistic activities in its own name and under its own banner and utilize these activities to aid direct recruitment of new members into the SWP. At the same time, the Plenum authorizes the Political Committee to invite the WP to collaborate with our party in practical actions in those cases, where in the judgment of the Political Committee, such collaboration would be advantageous in serving practical ends without blurring or compromising political lines.

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RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY SWP NC MINORITY

PLENUM RESOLUTION ON UNITY WITH THE WORKERS PARTY

1. The Plenum declares that the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party are sufficiently in agreement on basic program to require and justify unity. The political differences between the two are compatible with membership in one revolutionary party.

2. The Workers Party resolution and letters on unity constitute a significant change in the policy of that group. Hitherto it had justified its split and continued separation from the SWP on two grounds: (1) Its opposition to the SWP's defense of the Soviet Union, (2) the bureaucratic régime in the SWP. Recently, as the question of defense of the Soviet Union receded into the background, the WP had based its entire justification for separate existence on the régime in the SWP. Now, however, the WP is compelled to admit that it cannot continue to defend this position; it states that "the interests of uniting the Fourth Internationalists in the United States on a sound foundation are more important than the régime in the SWP." When the WP now states that the political and theoretical differences "do not go beyond what is permissible within the ranks of a single revolutionary party," it is at last accepting the position laid down by our party at the time of the split in 1940.

3. In the united party, the present program of the SWP will prevail, by virtue of the fact that we, as the WP admits, constitute the majority. The WP's communications to us explicitly recognize the principle of democratic centralism, thus pledging that as a minority it will be bound by discipline in action.

4. These commitments clear the path of practically all obstacles to unity except one. The remaining obstacle is a fear of unity by many of our members and perhaps also by members of the WP. The factional strife of 1939-40, the split and the more than five years of separate existence have left deep scars. It is advisable to eradicate this subjective element before formally consummating unity.

For Collaboration Prior to Unity

5. We believe the necessary spirit of unity can be created by a period of collaboration and cooperation prior to unification. Having declared ourselves for unity, such collaboration and cooperation is conceived by us, not as a united front between parties with a perspective of separate existence, but as concrete preparation for unity. Among the preparations there shall be joint membership meetings, joint discussion bulletins, joint public meetings, collaboration in trade union work and other fields of activity.

6. The comrades of the WP have asked recognition of their right to publish a bulletin of their own within the united party. Such a right of any tendency in a Trotskyist party is taken for granted by us. But to recognize such a right and for comrades to exercise it, are two different things. Normally, where the party provides adequate opportunity for discussion in bulletins and the theoretical organ, the interests of the party as a whole and of the minority are better served by refraining from publishing a separate bulletin.

7. While we explicitly recognize the right of any group within the party to have its own bulletin if it so desires, we urge the comrades of the WP to refrain from exercising this right under the given circumstances in order to achieve unity on a proper basis. We guarantee them ample opportunity to present their point of view.

8. However, both we and the comrades of the WP will be in a better position to decide this question at the end of the period of cooperation and collaboration. We therefore propose to leave the final decision on it until the final steps for consummation of unity, with the understanding that we do not make it a condition of unity that the comrades of the WP refrain from issuing their own bulletin.

9. In view of the above decisions, the Plenum considers that there is a basis for collaboration between the majority and minority in the SWP in effecting the steps toward unity with the WP. The Plenum therefore accepts the offer of the minority to collaborate in this task and instructs the Political Committee to give representation to the minority on the negotiating committee. The Plenum takes note of the statement of the minority that, having formed its faction on the issue of unity, it will dissolve its faction when unity is consummated, leaving the remaining differences for discussion on

the plane of tendency, articles and lectures in the party organs and branches.

BENNET,
GOLDMAN
MORROW
WILLIAMS

STATEMENT OF MINORITY ON THE CANNON-STEIN-FRANK RESOLUTION

1. The resolution is designed to prevent unity. Opposition to unity is the privilege of any comrade. What is reprehensible in the Cannon-Stein-Frank resolution is its refusal to answer any of the questions which are central to the unity proposal: its evasion of an answer to the question whether or not the two parties are sufficiently in agreement on basic program to require and justify unity; its evasion of an answer to the question whether or not the political differences between the two parties are compatible with membership in one party; its evasion of an answer to the question whether or not the aim of the discussions with the Workers Party is to ascertain more accurately the political positions of the WP or the aim is to attempt to get the WP to abandon some of its political positions as a precondition for unity; its evasion of an answer to the question whether the WP's proposal for a tendency bulletin in the united party is or is not a right of any tendency in a Trotskyist party.

In their speeches the supporters of the resolution pretend that the difference between them and the minority is that the minority wants to rush speedily into unity whereas the majority wishes to move more slowly. This is completely untrue. As the minority Plenum resolution makes clear, we insist on a considerable period of preparation for unity by means of cooperation between the two parties *after* a decision by our party in favor of unity. This period of preparation is made necessary above all because the majority leaders have prejudiced the membership against unity.

On the other hand, the position of the Cannon-Stein-Frank resolution is not one of moving more slowly toward unity, but not to move at all toward unity.

2. In paragraph 11 the resolution repeats the formula of previous majority documents that programmatic agreement is the basis for unification. We of the minority have vainly attempted to get the majority to state unambiguously what it means by this: (1) that the WP must abandon one or more of the political positions on which it differs from us—an absurd demand since it is inconceivable that the WP will abandon its position on the Russian question, the principal disputed issue; or (2) the legitimate proposition that the WP, as an admitted minority, must abide by the discipline of the majority program—which the WP has already agreed to do.

Dishonest Ambiguity Repeated

It was bad enough that the majority insisted on using this ambiguous formula in its first letter of August 27 answering the unity proposal—bad since the minority had vainly attempted to amend the letter to state that the political differences are compatible with membership in one party. It was worse still, that, in his speech of September 1, Comrade Cannon, despite a direct question from Comrade Goldman, refused to specify what the majority meant by its ambiguous formula. It is nothing less than outrageous that the majority repeats this patently dishonest ambiguity again now, after the WP negotiating committee has repeatedly asked for clarification.

Comrade N. has reiterated the minority position that: "A thousand times more important (than the question of defense of the USSR) is unification, rather than the existence of two independent groups who *in the fundamentals* march under the one and the same banner. The program of the minority (i.e., WP) is known to the majority from the former's literature; there is no necessity to discuss it."

If the authors of the resolution disagree with that position, let them say so in their resolution: let them say either that they do not know the program of the WP and must now study it, or that they know the program of the WP and it is in agreement with us on fundamentals or that it is not; let them say whether they agree or do not agree that unification is more important than the question of the slogan of the defense of the USSR.

Differences Are Known

Anyone who assumes to play any rôle as a leader in our party certainly knows what the political differences are between our party and the WP. Are these differences compatible with unity? Anyone who thinks they are not compatible should have voted against unity discussions with the WP. Conversely, anyone who voted for unity discussions should have been ready to say that the political differences are compatible with unity. We are confronted with a monstrous paradox. In 1940 and thereafter we of the SWP always maintained that the political differences were compatible with party unity. Now the PC majority refuses to affirm our 1940 position. The argument justifying this refusal is absurd: "Five years ago, the faction which became the WP decided that the differences were not compatible with remaining inside the SWP. In the five years that have elapsed, life again proved the differences incompatible...." The WP was *wrong* when it considered that the differences were not compatible with remaining in in the same party, and we and Trotsky said they were wrong, and we did not abandon this position simply because "life," i.e., the mistake of the WP, led it to leave the party.

Why does the PC majority cling to its ambiguous formula about programmatic agreement? Is it possible that, after a period, the PC majority is going to confront us with "proof" that the political differences make unity impossible? But such "proof" must already exist, since we all know what the political differences are. In that case, in all honesty the PC majority should have said to begin with that it does not believe that the political premises exist for unity—more accurately, it should have continued to say this after the WP proposal for unity as it had said this previously.

In his September 1 speech "explainig" the PC letter's ambiguity on this question, Comrade Cannon claimed he was answering this question when he stated: "It is up to the WP to demonstrate that the political differences are compatible with unity." Absolutely false: we have to determine this question for ourselves, independently of what the WP does or does not do.

WP Answered Satisfactorily

Comrade Cannon went on to identify this question with the question, "Will the WP'ers be loyal this time?" i.e., will they abide by party discipline. *This is a different question.* It is a legitimate question. In view of the attitude of the WP leaders in the split of 1940, it was necessary to put the question to them. An affirmative answer to that question assures unity and the WP has answered it satisfactorily. But, before we asked the WP leaders to answer that question, our party should have answered for itself the question whether the political differences are compatible with membership in one party. Otherwise, it is pointless to ask the WP leaders whether they will abide by party discipline—or indeed to ask them any questions or conduct any discussions.

Until the PC majority adopts the position that the political differences are compatible with party membership, the danger will continue to exist that the PC majority will, on the basis of facts already known to all of us, suddenly "discover" that the political differences bar unity. In that case it would be clear to all that its agreement to discuss with the WP was nothing but a maneuver designed to confuse the party and the International.

We demand an answer to this question. Is there sufficient agreement on the fundamentals of program to make unity possible and desirable? One can honestly answer yes or no; but to refuse to answer the question, after all that has transpired, is clearly a subterfuge.

3. The result of this subterfuge is that we are asked to vote on the absurd proposal of discussions with the WP without any principles laid down as to what shall be the basis for unity. Shall our discussion sub-committee tell the WP negotiators that the latter's position on the Russian question is or is not a bar to unity? No answer in the resolution. Shall our discussers tell the WP negotiators that the aim of the discussions is to ascertain the differences, or that the aim is to get the WP to abandon its positions? No answer in the resolution. Shall our discussers say that the differences on organizational questions are or are not a bar to unity? No answer. In a word, discussions are to be carried on without indicating to our discussers the basis on which they are to discuss. What is the difference, then, between the previous meetings of the Cannon-Stein-Frank committee with the WP committee, and those which presumably will follow the Plenum? The previous meetings were characterized by the Cannon-Stein-Frank committee as not negotiations but discussions since, they stated, they had no authority to negotiate

and no instructions on what basis to negotiate. Future meetings, on the basis of their resolution, will be no different than the previous ones. In that case, why call a Plenum and adopt a Plenum resolution? Why, indeed, except to go through the motions of pretending to consider the unity proposal seriously.

Resolution Evasive

4. The WP negotiators have asked a series of key questions concerning the basis and purpose of the discussions. They summarize these in their letter of October 4 to the Plenum and request of the Plenum that it answer these questions. They ask that an end be put by the Plenum to the situation wherein the SWP committee is "in a position where it cannot and does not make any proposals of its own on the question of unity, where it cannot express itself definitely on proposals made by us, and where it is even unable to declare that the SWP has decided in favor or in opposition to unity itself." They further ask the Plenum to take a position "on the series of proposals made by us for the basis on which the unification should be achieved...." These requests are not only reasonable but one can hardly imagine how discussions can continue without answering them. Yet the resolution evades them. It will be an evasion of its duty if this Plenum closes without answering these proposals of the WP. One can accept them, one can reject them, but to evade them is politically indefensible.

5. The August 27 letter of our PC, in rejecting the WP proposal for cooperation between the two parties, stated it would agree to cooperation at a later date only "if, in the course of the discussions, it appears that we are approaching agreement on the most important political questions. ...But to attempt to begin with such practical cooperation, prior to a definite approach to unification, would seem to us to put things upside down and lead to a sharpening of conflict over secondary questions rather than their moderation."

What, then, is the purpose of the resolution in proposing now "to invite the WP to collaborate with our party in practical actions in those cases where such collaboration would be advantageous in serving practical ends without blurring or compromising political lines." According to the August 27 letter of the PC, such cooperation would lead to a sharpening of conflicts unless the fact was first established that we are approaching unification definitely. Now, without establishing this fact, the PC proposes cooperation. Here is confusion worse confounded.

We bluntly warn the party and the International: Cooperation after a declaration for unity would prepare the memberships of both parties for unity, but the so-called limited cooperation without a previous declaration for unity can very well serve the aim of preventing unity. Under the given circumstances it is necessary for those who sincerely desire cooperation as preparation for unity to vote *against* the formula of cooperation without a declaration in favor of unity.

Minority Barred from Sub-Committee

6. Anyone who understands the ABC of politics knows that the August 27 letter of the PC agreeing to discuss unity with the WP was a political victory for the PC minority, whose initiative had led to this development. Quite apart from the principle of minority representation, those who initiated the unity proposal were entitled to participate in the unity discussions. Yet the very same PC meeting which sent the letter to the WP also barred the minority from the PC sub-committee which met with the WP.

And this was merely the forerunner of a renewed barrage against the minority which had dared to fight for unity.

In his September 1 speech explaining the PC letter on unity, Comrade Cannon accused the minority: "Perhaps their new idea is unity first and then a bigger split." The "perhaps" does not save this from being an outrageous accusation. Outrageous not merely because it is not true, but because if the PC majority were to act on it, unity would be put off to the Greek Kalends. For if one does not accept the propositions of both the minority and the WP that the political differences are compatible with unity; that unity is more important than the régime; that unity can be achieved on a lasting basis—then no political criteria remain for determining the aims of both the minority and the WP. There remains then only the capricious and arbitrary psychologizing of the PC majority concerning what is going on in the minds of the minority and the WP. This approach has nothing in common with Marxist politics.

Superfically more political was Comrade Cannon's further declaration that before unity can take place, the party must first "stamp out disloyalty in the ranks and restore discipline in the party." Certainly this would be true were there disloyalty and indiscipline. But Comrade Cannon falsely applies these terms to the minority's fraternization and discussion with WP leaders and members. We of the minority declare that no amount of such threats and abuse will swerve us from our politically correct and organizationally loyal policy of continuing to urge the WP to persist in its course toward unity despite all obstacles placed in the way. To put off unity until after "stamping out" the pro-unity minority is scarcely the prelude which would usher in unity! It is clear that the attack on the minority as "disloyal" is in reality an attack on unity.

This attack continues at the Plenum. It is "cleverly" left out of the resolution, which tries to assume a statesmanlike tone, but it is the main burden so far of all the speeches of the majority spokesman. On this question, too, we demand an end to ambiguity. If the majority really means what it says, then let it adopt an unambiguous rule governing the situation: one which would forbid the minority from discussing with the WP leaders. In that case we would have to submit to the decision or leave the party. Such a ruling would be proof conclusive of the deep-going degeneration of the party leadership. But its verbal assertion to the same effect is also such a proof.

7. It should be obvious to any political person that the absurd basis on which the discussions are left—on no basis except the whims of the SWP discussers to drag out the talks endlessly—may soon prove unacceptable to the WP. With none of their proposals accepted, with no alternative proposals offered, with nothing decided by the Plenum, the WP may very well conclude that there is no point in continuing such formless discussions. The resolution appears aimed to test the patience of the WP negotiators to the breaking point by an endless series of pointless meetings. In a word, it is calculated to throw responsibility for disruption of discussions on the WP, whereas the reality is that the course set by the resolution must inevitably lead to disruption of discussions. We brand this as trickery and declare that if this resolution becomes party policy the responsibility for disruption will be on the shoulders of this Plenum.

BENNETT
GOLDMAN
MORROW
WILLIAMS

October 7, 1945.

WP REPLY TO SWP PLENUM RESOLUTION

October 29, 1945

James P. Cannon, National Secretary
Socialist Workers Party
New York, N. Y.

Dear Comrade:

Our Political Committee has discussed the resolution adopted by the Plenum of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party on the question of unity. Before making a definitive reply to this resolution, we wish to afford the SWP the opportunity to make clear to us its position on a number of points. They relate to matters on which the resolution is either ambiguous or erroneously motivated, or which it does not deal with at all .

Your resolution states that "Both parties acknowledge that the programmatic differences which led to the 1940 split have not been moderated but that, on the contrary, some of them have been deepened and new important points of divergence have developed in the interim." So far as any acknowledgment on the part of our delegation to the preliminary discussions is concerned, this statement is erroneous, at least in part. The "programmatic differences which led to the 1940 split" were confined to the question of the "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" in the war. Our delegation did not and could not acknowledge that the difference on this question has not moderated but deepened. On the contrary, the first resolution on unity adopted by our National Committee took "note of the fact that the SWP itself has officially taken the view that the slogan of 'unconditional defense of the Soviet Union' does not, at the present time, occupy the prominent position it was given at the beginning of the war, that

it has receded into the background." The only political difference involved in the 1940 split was the one over unconditional defense of Russia. If there were other, and programmatic, differences, they have not yet been brought to our attention. It is true that since the split other differences have developed between the two organizations. It is also true that on many questions these differences have deepened. We have not sought to conceal this fact or its importance. We emphasize at all times our attachment to our point of view. What we find it necessary to insist upon, however, is that these differences, deep as they are, are compatible with membership in a revolutionary Marxist party, as contrasted with a party based on the concept of monolithism.

Unity Possible Despite Differences

Your resolution refers also to "This proposed unity without programmatic agreement." If this refers, as it seems to do, to our proposal for unity, the statement is erroneous. We have indeed mentioned in other documents our "important differences with the SWP on a number of political and theoretical questions." If, nevertheless, we declared that unity is both desirable and possible, it was, as stated in our letter to you of September 15, because of the "fact that on this plane, the plane of basic program and principle, the two parties are close enough in their positions to require and justify immediate unification, on grounds similar to those which made their membership in one party possible and desirable in the period prior to the split." If it is your view now that there is *no* programmatic agreement between the two parties, or no programmatic agreement worthy of significant consideration, an explicit statement would contribute to the necessary clarification.

Your resolution states further that "This proposed unity without programmatic agreement, in fact with acknowledged disagreements between the two tendencies, has no precedent, so far as we know, in the history of the international Marxist movement." This statement is also erroneous. Our delegation stated that it was hard to recall an example of a similar unification between divergent tendencies in the international *Trotskyist* movement. This is so largely because the Trotskyist movement was for so long a *faction*, formally or in fact, of what it considered the international Marxist movement. However, this faction (tendency) repeatedly proposed unity with the then international Marxist movement (Comintern), which meant its unification with the Stalinist faction, that is, a tendency with which it had far less in common in any field than exists in common between the SWP and the WP today. Furthermore, the international Marxist movement is much older than the modern Trotskyist movement. If the SWP is concerned with precedent, the more than a hundred-year-old history of the international Marxist movement offers any number of precedents of good and healthy unifications between groups and tendencies with greater divergences than exist between ours.

On Practical Agreements

Your resolution concludes with the decision "To reject any united front for propaganda." This statement is erroneous, because it is misleading. It gives the impression that such united fronts have been proposed by the Workers Party. You must be aware of the fact that this is not the case. As we recall them, not one of our proposals for united action between the two parties could be placed in the category of united fronts for propaganda. All of them dealt with proposals for united action in different fields of the class struggle. We proposed, for example, united action in the Minneapolis defense case; in the fight against fascism (anti-Smith campaign); in the trade unions, on such questions as all progressive unionists, let alone revolutionary Marxists, can and do unite on; in the New York election campaign. We reiterate our point of view on such practical agreements whether or not unity between the two organizations is achieved.

A more important question is the question of unity itself. In our letter to you, dated October 4, we made several specific requests of your Plenum. Except perhaps for the last point, that dealing with practical collaboration, we do not find in your resolution a specific and precise reply.

We asked the Plenum to take steps to terminate the situation where your delegation "cannot and does not make any proposals of its own on the question of unity, where it cannot express itself definitely on proposals made by us, and where it is even unable to declare that the SWP has decided in favor or in opposition to unity itself."

Your resolution replies with a vigorous attack upon our party. That is of course its right. The attack can and will be answered in due course and in such a way as to promote clarity and understanding of the differences between the two tendencies.

Resolution Gives No Position

But the resolution does not in any way inform us, or any other reader, of the position of the SWP on the most important questions relating to unity, or even inform us as to whether or not such a position has been taken.

Is the SWP now in favor of unity, or opposed to it? In the preliminary discussions, we were informed by the SWP delegation that the Plenum of its National Committee was convoked for the purpose of giving an answer to precisely this question; in fact, that the date of your Plenum had been advanced to give the earliest consideration to this question. We do not find the answer in the resolution. At least, it is nowhere stated explicitly. We are therefore obliged to conclude that the SWP has rejected the proposal for unity, either as put forth by ourselves, by the minority group in the SWP, or by anyone else, and to act on this conclusion unless you indicate to us that we are in error.

Is the SWP now in a position to act on the concrete proposals made by us on the question of unity? In the preliminary discussions, your delegation pointed out that it was not authorized to do so until its National Committee met and arrived at decisions. We find no answer in the Plenum resolution to our proposals.

Demand Concrete Position

Our delegation stated our point of view as to the basis for the unification. Summed up in one sentence, it is this: Sufficient programmatic agreement actually exists between the two given organizations to warrant and make possible unity, and the differences that actually exist are compatible with membership in a single revolutionary party. On this basic question, your resolution takes no position except to say that it "cannot be determined by any abstract rule, it can only be answered *concretely*." We remind you that the question was not put by us abstractly, but quite concretely. The nature and views of the two organizations are well known to both, and could not be more concrete. Their range of agreement is as well known and as concrete as their range of differences. Our proposals as to the steps to be taken for effecting the unity are not general, but specific — concrete. There seems to us to be no sound reason for failing to take a concrete position.

Our delegation states, as your resolution puts it quite exactly, "That they would insist on the right to publish their own discussion bulletin under their own control." We asked that your Plenum take a position on this proposal. Your delegation indicated that this is what its Plenum would do. Your resolution, however, merely records our statement, but does not say if the SWP accepts or rejects our proposal.

Your delegation at the preliminary discussions was not in a position to make counter-proposals, or proposals of any kind, until the meeting of its Plenum. In the resolution adopted by the Plenum, we find only the proposal "to authorize the Political Committee to prepare and carry through a thorough discussion and clarification of the theoretical, political and organizational issues in dispute, and fix the position of the party precisely on every point in preparation for the consideration and action of the next party convention." The resolution also states that "all the differences between the two parties (should be) probed to the depth so that not the slightest ambiguity remains."

Ambiguity Must Be Eliminated

We for our part welcome any discussion of the differences between the two tendencies and are prepared to participate in it to the best of our ability so that the positions are precisely fixed and all ambiguity eliminated. But ambiguity on the question of the unification itself must also be eliminated.

However, your resolution does not give any indication of how the discussion is to be carried on, or what its purpose is with reference to the unification of the two groups.

It is possible that not all the members of the two parties are acquainted with the full nature and the full scope of the differences. A discussion will help acquaint them. But the leadership of the two parties is quite well aware of the nature, scope and depth of these differences. It has expressed

itself on them repeatedly and in public. This was also established "formally," so to speak, in the preliminary discussions. The head of the SWP delegation observed, and rightly, in our view, that for the present period the differences are not only known but "frozen." The question we raised then, and now, was simply this: Knowing the nature and scope of the differences as it does, and knowing also that for the present period these differences are "frozen," does the leadership of the SWP consider that unity is possible and desirable? Does it consider that the differences are compatible within one revolutionary party? Your resolution, which was adopted, we note, by the leadership of the party, fails to give an answer to these questions. The same holds true, we note also, of the question asked with regard to the position of the SWP on the *right* of a minority in a revolutionary Marxist party to issue a bulletin of its own tendency inside the party.

Demand Clarification

We agreed with what you wrote in your letter of August 28, that "the question of unification must be discussed with complete frankness and seriousness." You will understand from what we have written above that we find your resolution erroneously motivated, in part, and in other parts ambiguous or silent on what we consider the most important questions. We have before us the statement issued at your Plenum by the minority group in the SWP on the resolution adopted by the Plenum. It declares: "The resolution is designed to prevent unity." We do not wish to agree with this conclusion. That is why, before we arrive at a definitive conclusion of our own, we wish to have from you a reply to the questions we have raised in this letter, and elsewhere, and which your resolution either deals with unclearly or fails to deal with at all.

Upon receipt and discussion of your reply, our Committee will be better able to express its opinion in detail and to make any further proposals it may have. In this connection, we ask you to consider now the matter which has thus far not been dealt with in our discussion, namely, the matter of informing all the other groups of the Fourth International about the developments in the unity question in the United States, and of the contribution to solving this question that they are called upon to make.

Fraternally yours,
MAX SHACHTMAN,
National Secretary,
Workers Party.

The Politics of THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS

(*Continued from page* 231)

lands troops, while demonstrators at the wharf shouted at the soldiers, 'Go back to Holland!' and 'Hands off Java!'" The crew had previously cabled the British National Union of Seamen that the Australian Seamen's Union had prohibited its members from working on ships carrying troops or supplies intended for use against the Indonesians, and asked if the British sailors should not do likewise. The crew, however, quit the ship, though no reply had been received.

In the United States, 175 Indonesian seamen walked off Dutch vessels in Albany, Baltimore and New York as a protest against the shipment of munitions and troops to suppress nationalist forces in the Netherlands Indies.

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French Trotskyists Poll Large Vote

French Trotskyist candidates, running in only two cities, polled close to 11,000 votes in the recent French elections. Given the extremely difficult circumstances under which they had to run their campaign, the vote is particularly heartening. According to the report published in the November 10 issue of *The Militant*, the French Trotskyists received 8,113 votes in Paris and 2,704 votes in Grenoble. Understood in the light of Stalinist power in France, especially in Paris, the vote becomes truly impressive. In addition to the active and severe opposition of the Stalinists, the Trotskyist party, Parti Communiste Internationaliste (International Communist Party), had to campaign without the benefit of a legal press, and with the added strain of having to post 20,000 francs for each candidate. Though their press, *La Vérité* (*The Truth*), is still illegal—de Gaulle and the Stalinists have blocked every request for its legalization—our French comrades distributed great numbers in the streets of the working class districts.

An analysis of the post-election scene in France will be made in our next issue.

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Filipino Guerrillas Raise Social Demands

Large sections of the Philippine Islands remain under the control of armed peasants organized in guerrilla bands that fought the Japanese occupation. Authorities in Manila estimate that the armed peasants number upward of 100,000, mostly organized in the militant Hukbalahap movement. The latter, one of many guerrilla movements, was distinguished by its militancy in the struggle against the Japanese, its independence of the "official" American resistance movement, mostly led by Filipino Scouts, and its program of agrarian reform directed against the American and Filipino landowners. It was American Army policy, almost from the day of landing, to disarm the "irresponsible" Hukbalahaps.

A report in the *New York Times* of October 30 says: "The Philippines today are a powder keg. The Hukbalahaps and other 'unrecognized guerrillas' roam the land with rifles on their shoulders and ideas for government reform in their heads and with hatred of the landed aristocracy in their hearts.... The danger is inherent, especially where the Hukbalahaps are concerned. The power of this already immense organization —centrally governed and with tentacles throughout the Commonwealth—is greatly feared."

The parliamentary wing of the agrarian movement is organized in the Democratic Action Party, claiming a membership of a quarter million. From the meager reports available, it is strongly influenced by the small, but strategically powerful, Stalinist movement in the islands. The Democratic Action Party has sought to unite the seven or eight guerrilla movements that sprang up during the occupation for a common electoral front in the coming elections.

From all indications, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Philippine Communist Party have joined during the occupation. The party claims 10,000 members, with a seven-fold increase during the war. Its only opponent is the Nacionalista Party, the conservative government party of President Osmena. As the party of the American quislings and the political voice of the landowners and business interests, from among whom most of the collaborators came during the Japanese occupation, the Nacionalistas find little support among the peasants with their guerrilla background.

Robert Trumbull, *New York Times* correspondent, reports an interview with one of the leaders of the Democratic Action Party, Judge Barrera, who left his court to accept a leading position in the movement, in which the latter says:

"During the war many landowners moved to Manila, virtually abandoning their farms. The tenants continued working. Now the landlords wish to eject these tenants because they say that during the war the tenants did not pay their fifty per cent to the landlords. As a matter of fact, some of the landlords could not be located by their tenants and if the tenant delivered his rice crop to Manila the Japanese would have taken it."

To this, Trumbull adds:

"The government is trying to mediate this difficulty. Right now the tenants are in the saddle because they have physical possession of the farms. They are armed and simply refuse to be ejected."

The imperialist war to determine among other things, whether Japanese or American imperialists would exploit the Philippines, has been properly utilized by the Filipino peasants to gain a little for themselves. As in all the colonies, it is to be observed that "When thieves fall out. . . ."

Efforts to eject these armed peasants from the land will, no doubt, result in civil war in the islands. Here, as elsewhere in the colonial world, American military might will become the super-oppressor. The American working class must declare its solidarity with the Filipino masses and demand the recall of all American troops and naval forces from the islands.

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